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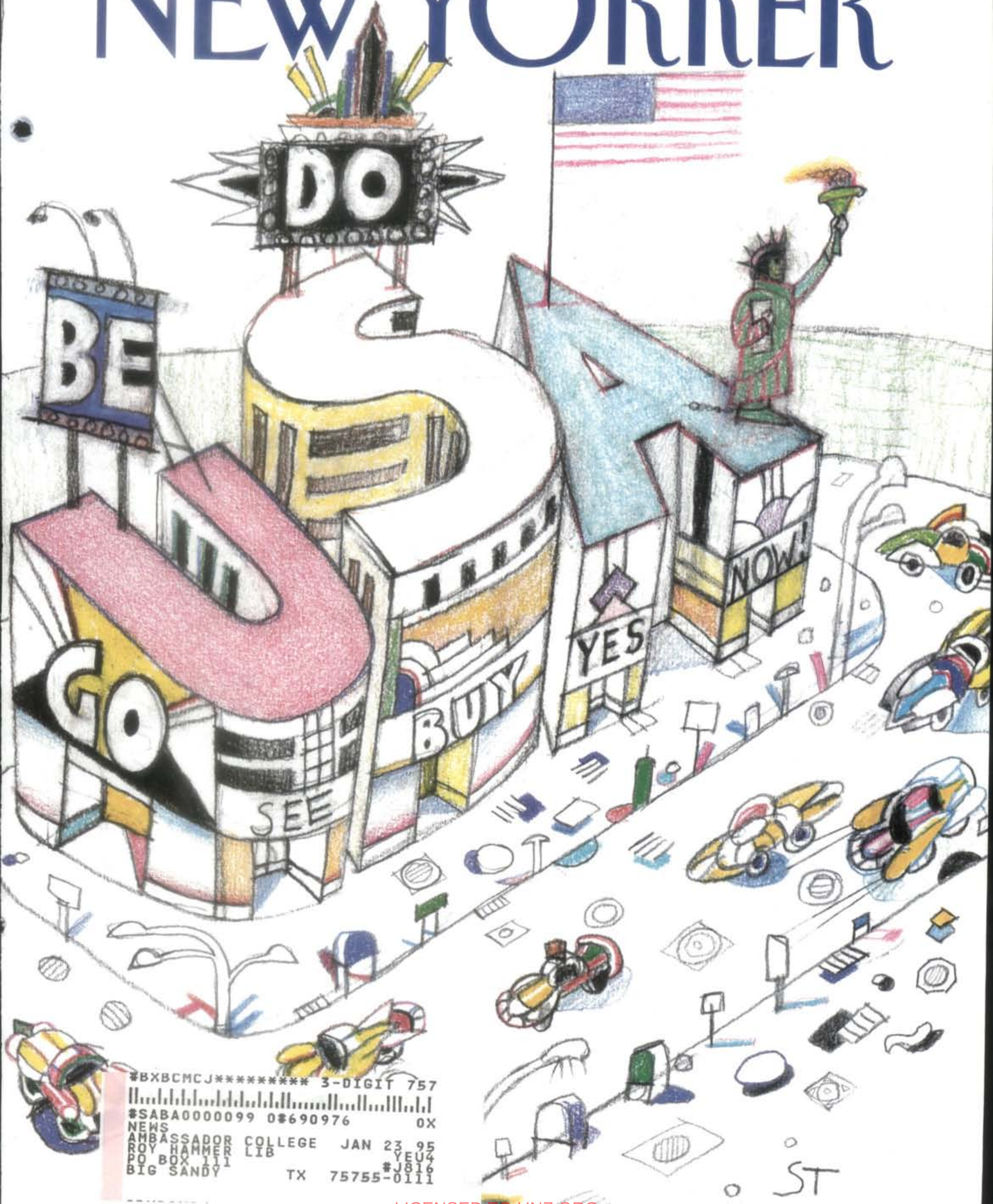

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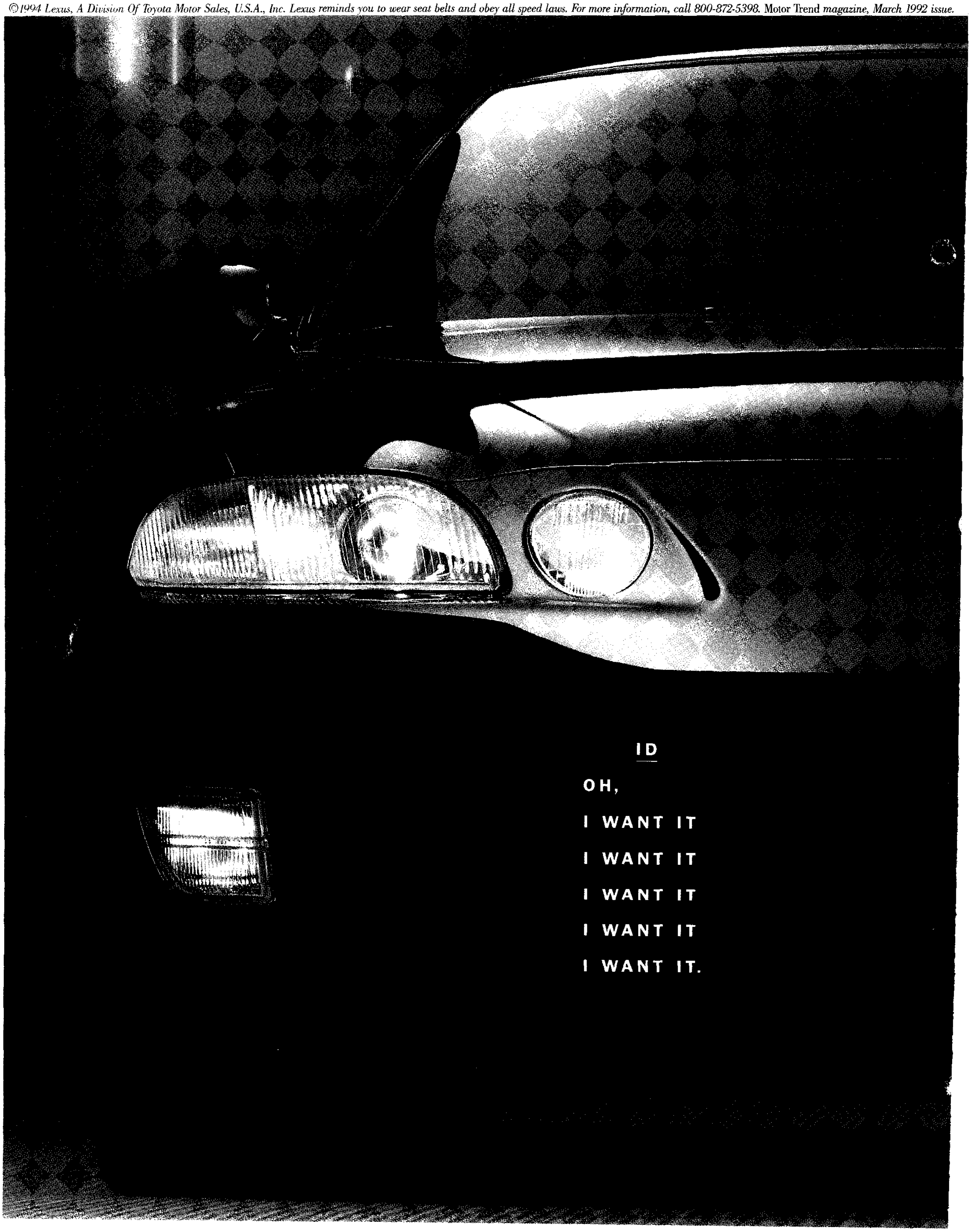
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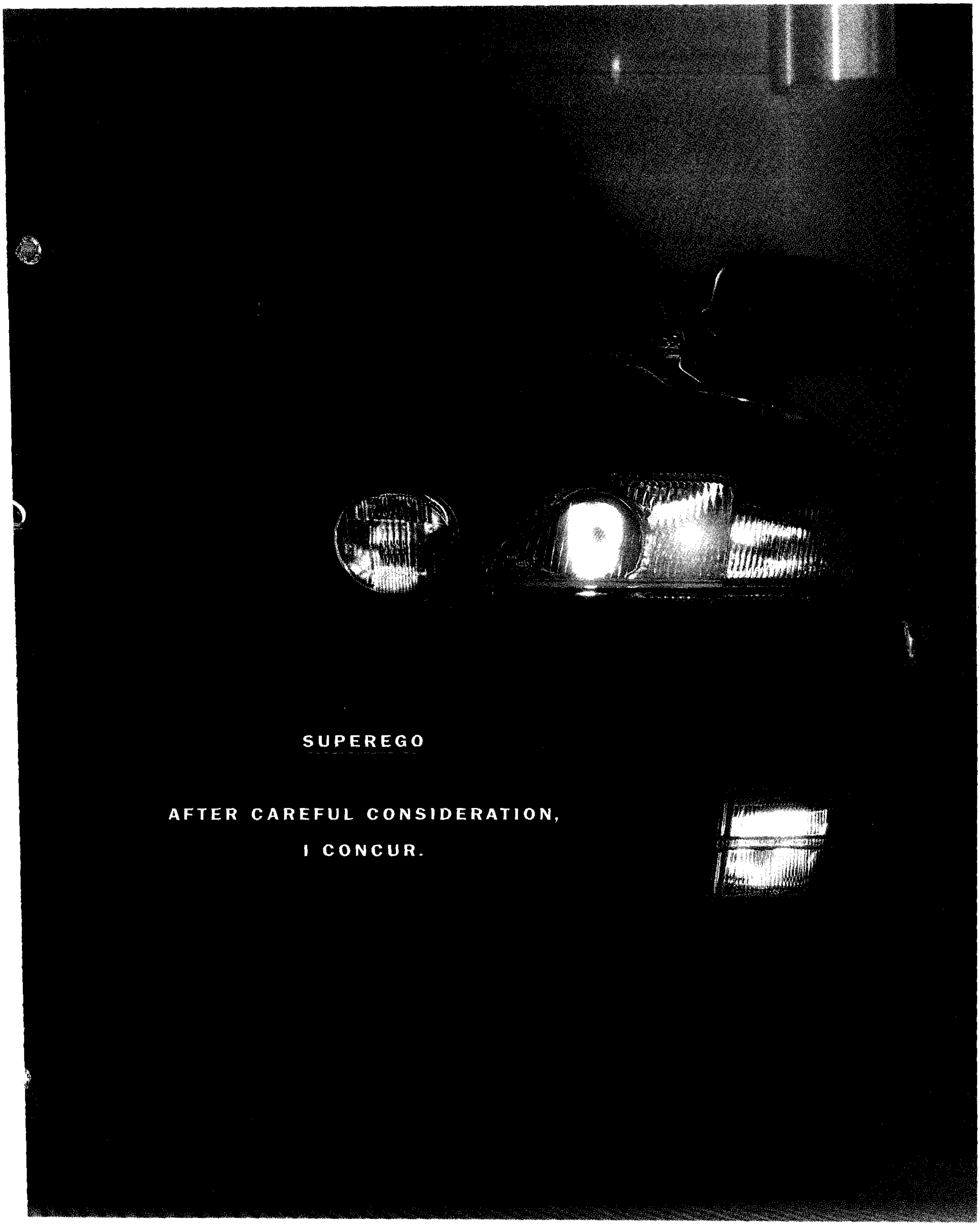
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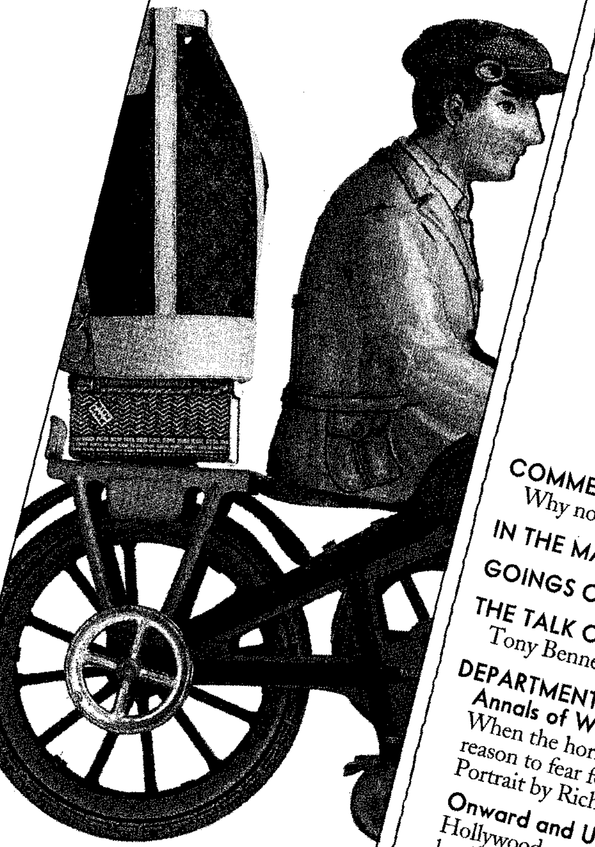

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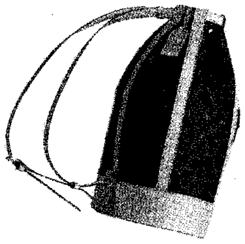

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THE NEW YORKER

APRIL 25, 1994

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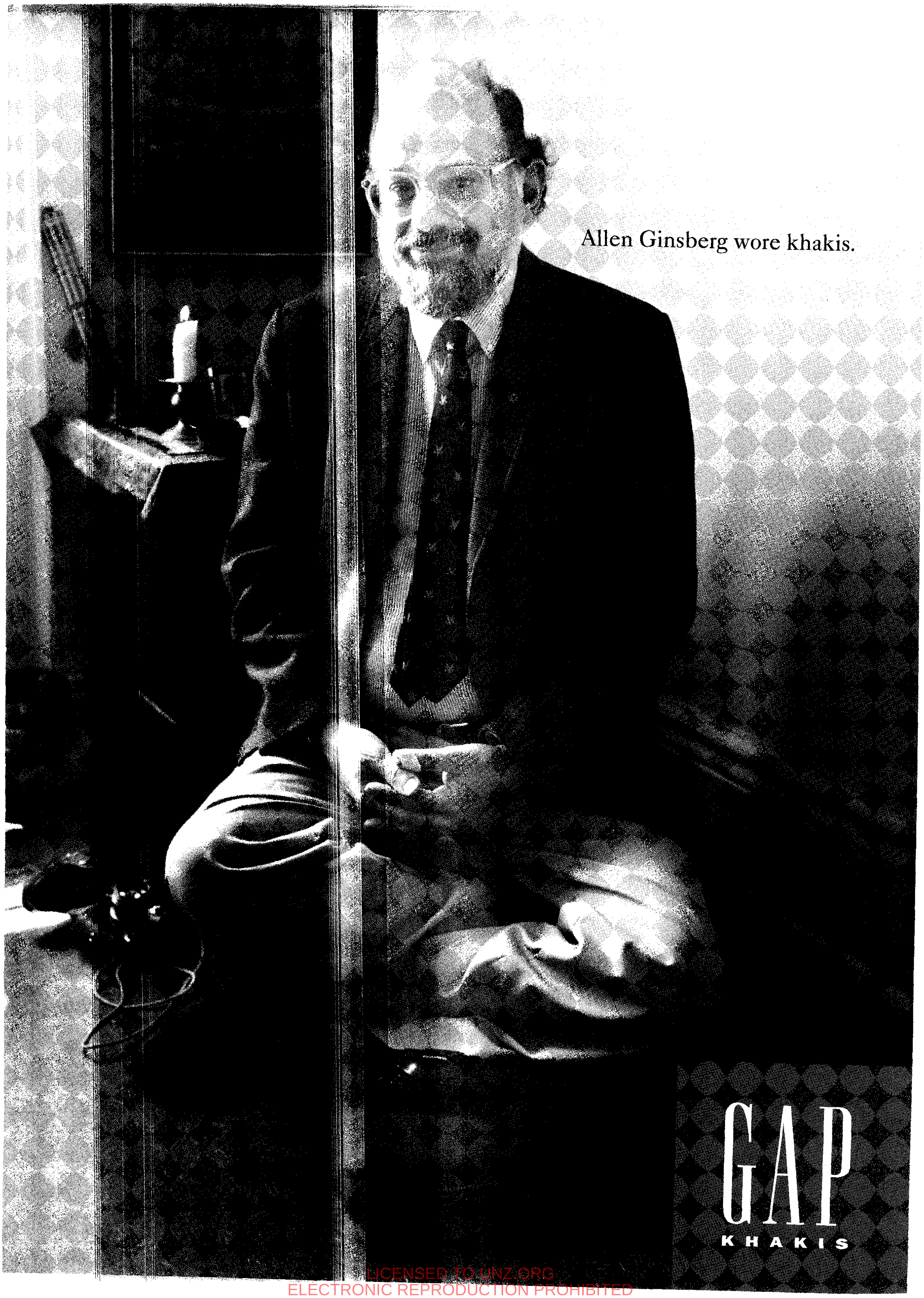
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COMMENT

KIM'S WHIMS

NEVER mind the Stalinist trappings of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Rather, think of North Korea as a Confucian kingdom and of its President, Kim Il Sung, as a monarch seeking the respect he thinks is due him; for a conception of North Korea as a vulnerable regime whose ruler's weaknesses can be manipulated, and not simply as the agent for the possible destruction of northern Asia, offers a potential way out of the nuclear crisis that has been simmering quietly, and alarmingly, for a year now on the Korean peninsula.

By some estimates, North Korea already possesses a nuclear weapon; by others, it is merely close to completing one. Whoever is right, Kim and his subalterns have made clear their belief that their political survival hinges on a bomb of their own. That may be so. Their economy is in ruins; their political system is an Orwellian tyranny. Their only claim on the world's attention is that they may possess a bomb and that their behavior over the years has been belligerent enough to suggest that they would use it.

Kim Il Sung's is a kingdom where for millennia fathers have passed the mantle of power to sons. And Kim, who is eighty-two years old, has maneuvered for years to make certain that upon his death his son, Kim Jong Il, who is now fifty-two, will succeed him. The bomb is the instrument that insures the survival of the House of Kim after the old man's death, for it protects the nation from annihilation—or so the North Korean leadership believes. North Korea has long been convinced that the United States is poised to attack it, and the presence in South Korea of thirty-seven thousand American troops underscores its fear. Besides, the bomb is all that gives Kim a claim to the tantalizingly elusive prize of being regarded by the rulers of countries that matter as the ruler of a country that matters, too.

Kim Il Sung has justified the stifling cruelties of his forty-eight-year reign by telling his people, time and again, that he personally has delivered them from their long and bitter history as a periph-

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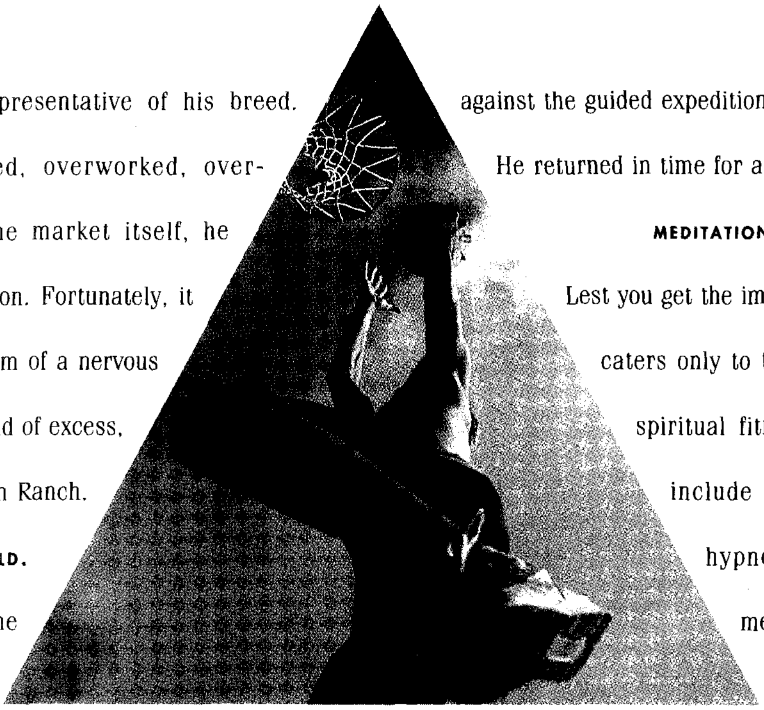
Proof of reincarnation.

{The tale of the stockbroker who came back as a human being.}



He was representative of his breed. Overstressed, overworked, overindulged. And like the market itself, he was due for a correction. Fortunately, it did not come in the form of a nervous breakdown or a weekend of excess, but in a visit to Canyon Ranch.

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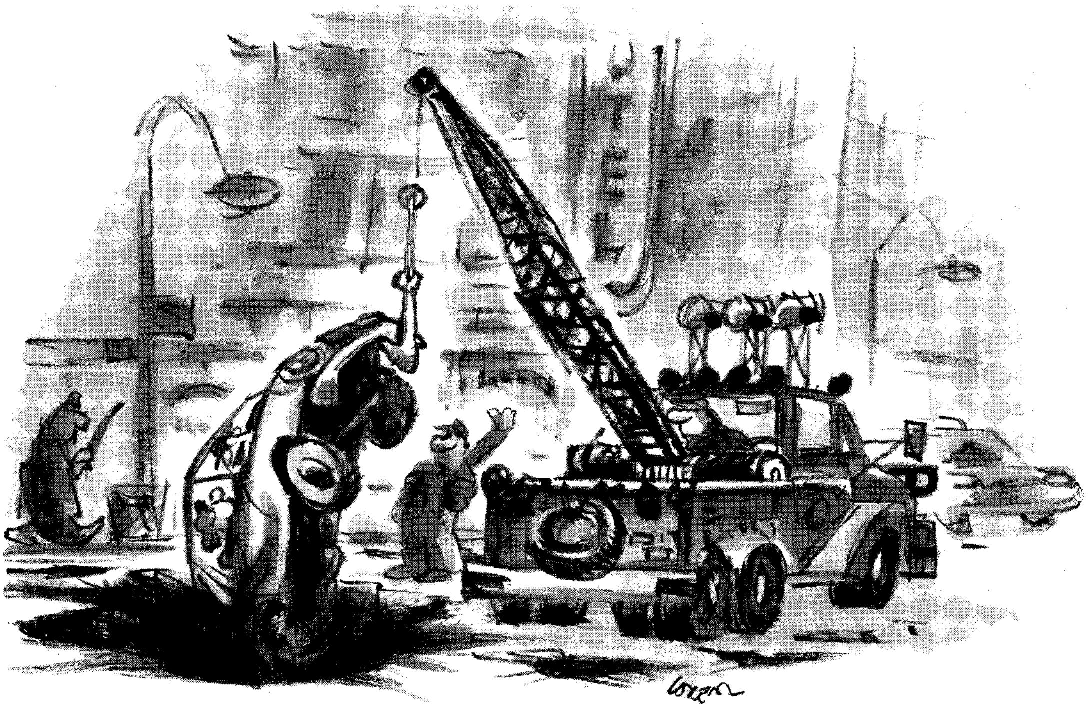

"That does it! I'm voting for Howard Stern."

• •

eral nation. The bomb means negotiations with Washington, and from such talks, the North Koreans hope, can come normalized relations, exchanges of envoys, and desperately needed foreign capital and investment. These constitute the legacy that Kim Il Sung desires for his son. And it is in this desire, born of hubris, that Kim is most vulnerable.

In the debate in this country over how to respond to North Korea's nuclear shell game, some have called for a preëmptive strike. That is, not to put too fine a point on it, utter madness. It would trigger war on the Korean Peninsula and wholesale destruction in a region that contains some of the world's most dynamic economies, South Korea's and China's among them. Less overtly provocative would be economic sanctions, the threat of which, a growing chorus of proponents argues, would force North Korea to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to complete the site visits that Pyongyang halted last month. But mere threats play to Kim Il Sung's strength, which is brinkmanship, a hallmark of Korean negotiation on both sides of the Thirty-eighth Parallel.

The Clinton Administration, in its handling of the crisis, has played its cards astutely, for the most part. It has avoided a showdown with North Korea, recognizing that the least likely way to get the North Koreans to comply with our demands is to make the kind of threat or take the kind of action that causes them to feel cornered. Kim Il Sung cannot tolerate a humiliating capitulation to American demands: he would see it as undermining the legitimacy of his regime and dooming the succession.

The Administration has begun using the United Nations to put pressure on Pyongyang. Late last month, the Security Council issued a statement calling on the North Koreans to allow the inspectors to finish their work. That statement, tepid as it sounds, was a measured first step toward possible sanctions. It was palatable to the Chinese, who would almost certainly have vetoed anything stronger, and it signalled that the world's patience was not infinite. But getting the North Koreans to comply will require giving them something in return for compliance—something they genuinely want. And what they want that can legitimately be granted is negotiations with Washington. Thus far, the United States has taken the position that it will talk with North Korea once the nuclear issue is resolved. The North Koreans maintain that the issue cannot be resolved without talks—which is to say without a relationship.

That is not just posturing on their part. They have a point. There should be talks—but on Washington's timetable. This would mean starting to negotiate immediately but, at the same time, setting the clock ticking toward sanctions; that is, if North Korea did not meet deadlines set by the I.A.E.A. for allowing inspections of its nuclear facilities the talks would end and sanctions would be imposed. Sanctions would not completely halt the flow of goods from China, or of cash from ethnic Koreans living in Japan; they would not by themselves force North Korea into compliance. But the North Korean regime knows that sanctions would make its already precarious economic position measurably worse. More important, the threat of sanctions would alter the nature of negotiations. It would tell the North Koreans that their words have consequences, as would their actions.

Kim Il Sung has littered his country with monuments designed to preserve his likeness, in heroic form, for eternity. He has made worship of himself and of his son a religion that can tolerate no apostates. His preposterous vanity is America's most signal advantage in dealing with him, provided that America is not too proud to seize it. The thing he craves from the outside world—above all, from America—is recognition: for himself, his state, and his son. For America to give it would cost nothing more than what, if the situation were reversed, would be rightly dismissed as a very slight loss of face.

No matter what the rest of the world does, Kim Il Sung is not going to surrender his bomb or his dream of building one. But in exchange for something he alone values he can be kept in check. That, in fact, is about the best that can be hoped for. America need not worry that recognition will prolong his rule or guarantee his son's; once the father dies, the regime could well fall of its own weight. But, for the moment, recognition would keep him where America wants him: talking, and not peddling his single, potentially deadly asset. ♦

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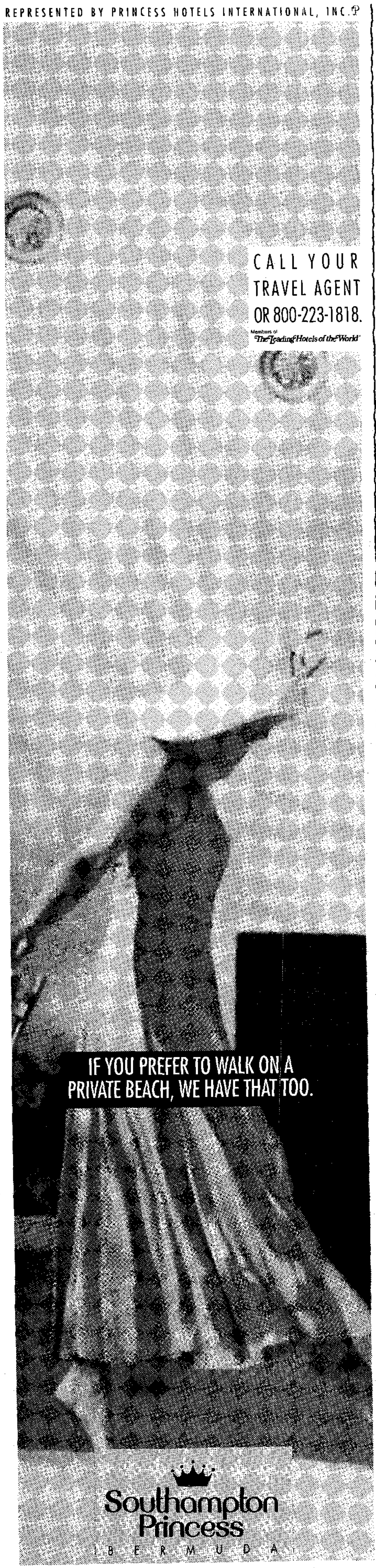
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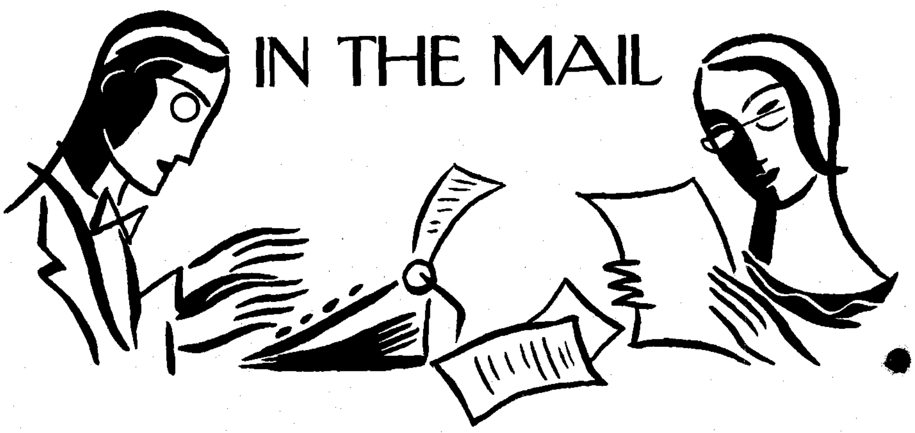


IN THE MAIL

BRUCE CUTLER

Bruce Cutler willfully violated a federal court's orders repeatedly. That fact justifies his conviction for criminal contempt, and your March 28th Comment errs in arguing otherwise. More than twenty-five years ago, the United States Supreme Court ruled clearly that parties *may not disobey* judicial orders even when they believe those orders to be invalid. The proper expression of disagreement is an immediate appeal, not disobedience. As the Court noted, "respect for judicial process is a small price to pay for the civilizing hand of law, which alone can give abiding meaning to constitutional freedom." Defense attorneys in the recent World Trade Center bombing case successfully challenged Judge Duffy's pretrial gag order. Bruce Cutler could have similarly appealed Judge Glasser's orders to the Second Circuit, but did not. Having himself thrown the Constitution and due process "out the window," Mr. Cutler deserves no sympathy for his contumacy.

MARK ECKENWILER
Brooklyn, N.Y.

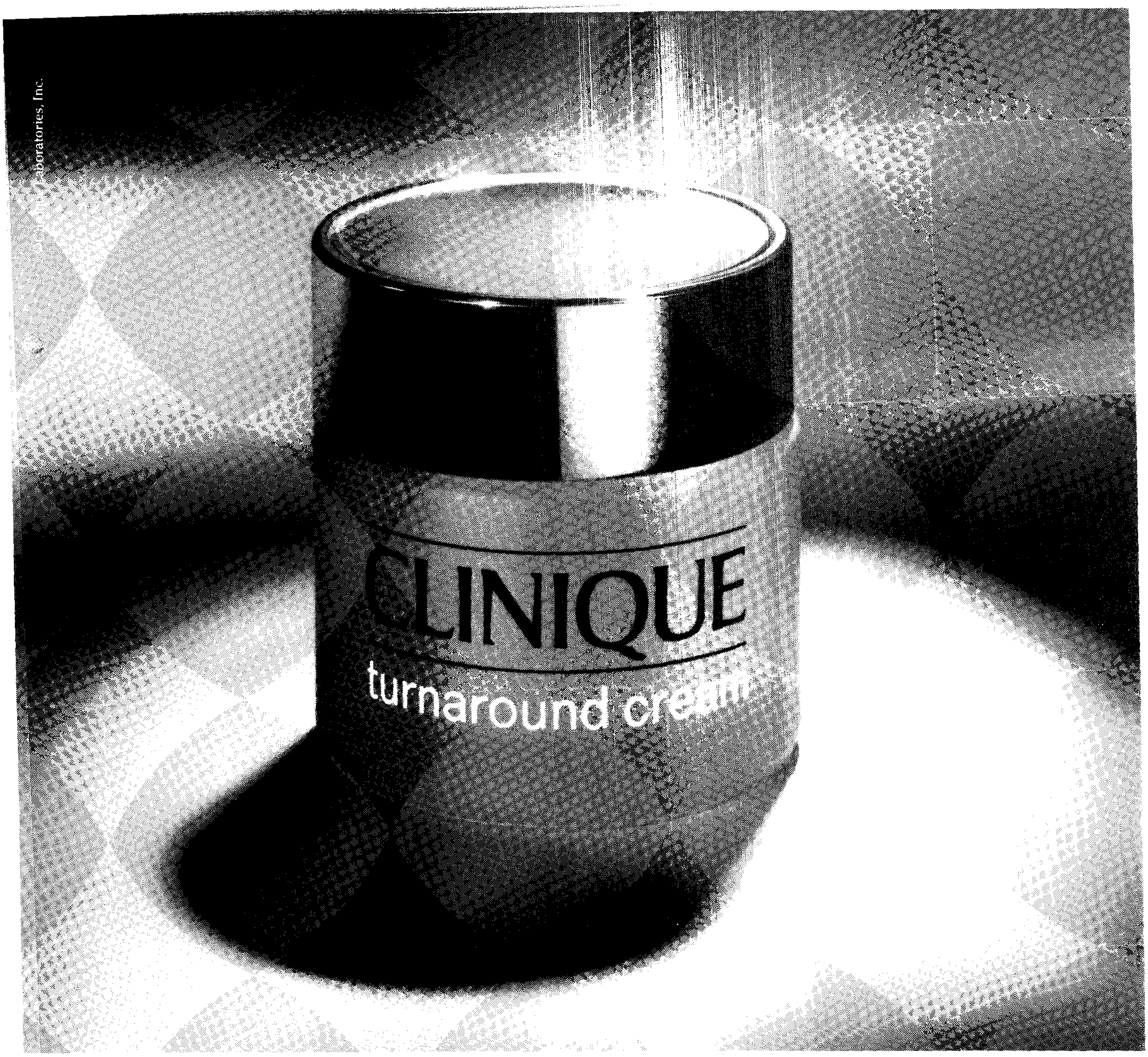
While I wholeheartedly agree that Gerald Shargel is "one of the most brilliant criminal-defense attorneys in America," Fredric Dannen's article ("Defending the Mafia," February 21st) levelled an unnecessary attack on the skills and abilities of Bruce Cutler. Some time ago, I had the good fortune to work alongside Mr. Cutler in a complex, multidefendant, six-month-long trial. His cross-examinations were direct, well crafted, and potent. His summation was particularly compelling. And that is not only my opinion. A recent summation delivered by Mr. Cutler was characterized by a California court of appeal as a "skillful and scrupulously fair closing argument" that "had put the prosecution case in considerable jeopardy." Mr. Cutler's oratory relies on wit, sarcasm, careful use of the facts, and, of course, the stormy force of his personality. This quality cannot be underestimated, for it adds a weight and a presence to a defense which are invaluable. If the public defines a defense lawyer as an attorney who is dedicated to his client, supremely skilled in the courtroom, and fearless within the bounds of the law, then it has found one in Bruce Cutler.

ALAN S. FUTERFAS
New York City

GENE WARS

I empathize with John Seabrook's unease about genetic engineering, which he expresses in his review of "The Gene Wars" (Books, March 28th). But I think that Mr. Seabrook, despite his skepticism over the exaggerated claims of the Human Genome Project's potential benefits, may have fallen into a trap set by the way molecular biologists talk about DNA and genes. As a biologist, I know that Mr. Seabrook's statement that "the [genetic] sequence is a code that contains a complete set of instructions for making and operating a human being" overstates the case. For instance, the genome does not predict the effects that the state of the nutrition, health, and economic and social well-being of the mother will have on any developing fetus, much less the way the child will be affected by everything that happens after his or her birth. We are not merely readouts of our DNA.

RUTH HUBBARD
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.



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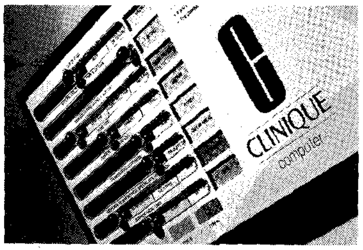

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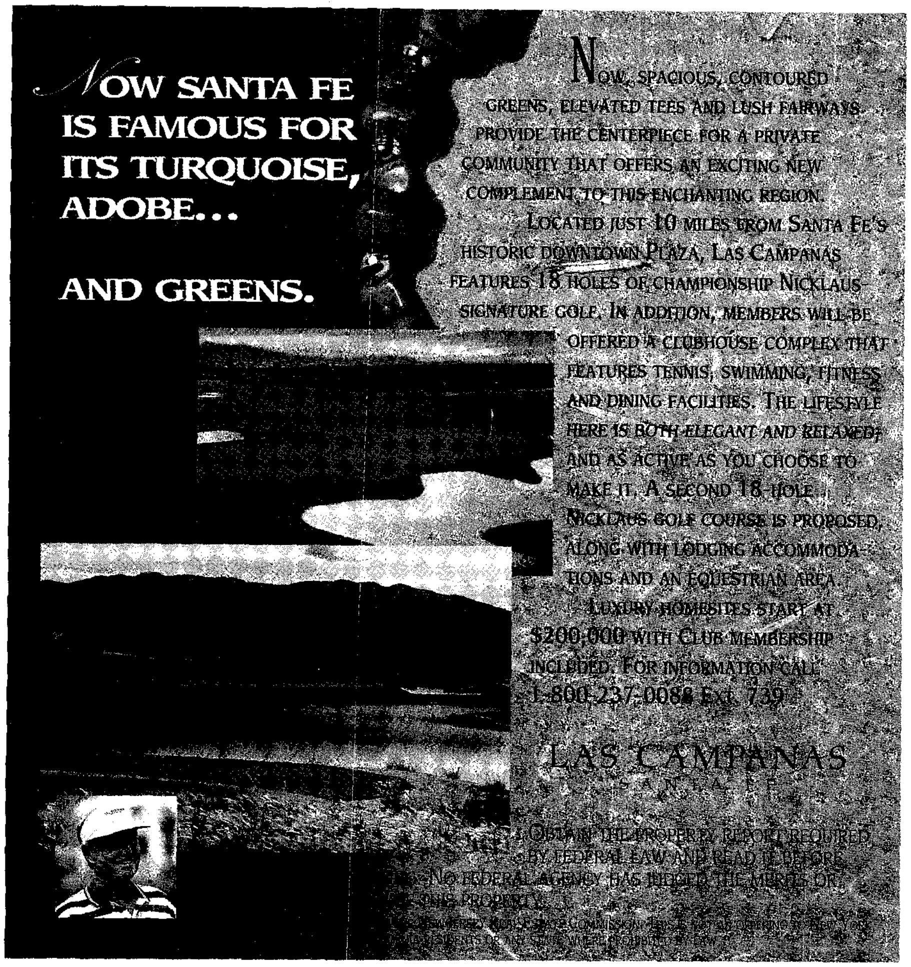

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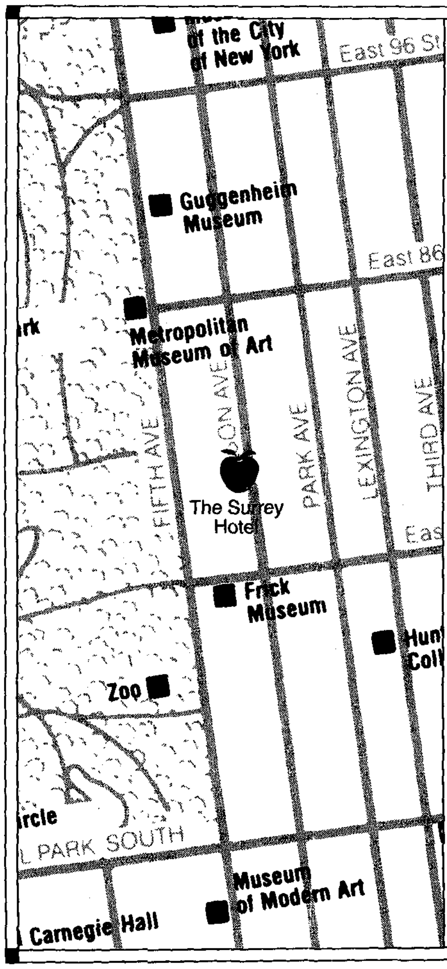

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LENI RIEFENSTAHL

Terrence Rafferty's review of the recent documentary about Leni Riefenstahl (The Current Cinema, March 28th) reminded me of the day I attended a première showing of her Nazi propaganda epic "Triumph of the Will," in Heilbronn, Germany, in 1935.

At the time, I was a junior in high school, and the entire student body was required to attend. There were loud and boisterous *Sieg heils* from the cinema audience. I was one of three Jewish students, and while all our classmates were on their feet, saluting and singing, we were ordered to remain seated. Verbal abuse, even spitting, followed the movie opening. A few months thereafter, the three of us were thrown out of school altogether. Our formal education had come to an abrupt end. Not for a single moment will I believe that Miss Riefenstahl was naïve and did not know of the terrible acts of persecution going on at the very theatres in which her films were shown. Like so many other German artists at the time, she just looked the other way.

JAMES MAY
Lake Worth, Fla.

DRAWING DISTINCTIONS

As an ardent admirer of Andy Logan, and an Arab-American and professor of Middle Eastern history, I turned to "Middle East on the Hudson" (March 28th) with real enthusiasm. However, I found Ms. Logan's statement that Rashid Baz, the man accused of shooting several Hasidic teen-agers on the Brooklyn Bridge, had not previously displayed "more than routine Arab anti-Semitism" deeply offensive. Anti-Semitism certainly exists among Arabs and has been propagated by some Arab regimes. But one must note that numerous Arabs, at both a popular and an official level, have been able to differentiate between Zionism or Zionist policies and Judaism and Jews.

RALPH COURY
Fairfield, Conn.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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THE THEATRE

And So to Bed

If at 10:45 P.M. the streets around Times Square appear less bustling these days, it may be because fewer Broadway shows are letting out at that hour. Many new productions of note—from “Picnic” to “Passion”—have cut their running times by eliminating intermission. In-house concessionaires may not be happy about this state of affairs, but almost everyone else is. Waiters are as apt to collect tips after the curtain as they are before; taxi-drivers can count on midtown pickups from at least nine-thirty, when “Medea” lets out, to eleven-thirty, when “Angels in America” disperses; and cops at the Times Square subway stop no longer preside over eleven-o’clock platforms that resemble Penn Station on a Friday afternoon in summer. Theatregoers are happiest of all. Instead of grumbling about not getting their money’s worth, most people seem mildly elated. In an era when filmmakers can’t seem to keep movies under two hours, the idea of a play or musical that allows commuters to reach home in time for all of “Charlie Rose” and Manhattanites to spend some quality time with the dog is at least momentarily welcome.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			20	21	22	23
24	25	26				

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

The Best Little Whorehouse Goes Public—A sequel to the 1978 musical, with much of the same creative lineup: Larry L. King (book), Peter Masterson (book and direction), Tommy Tune (direction and, with Jeff Calhoun, choreography), and Carol Hall (score). Dee Hoty and Scott Holmes co-star. In previews. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

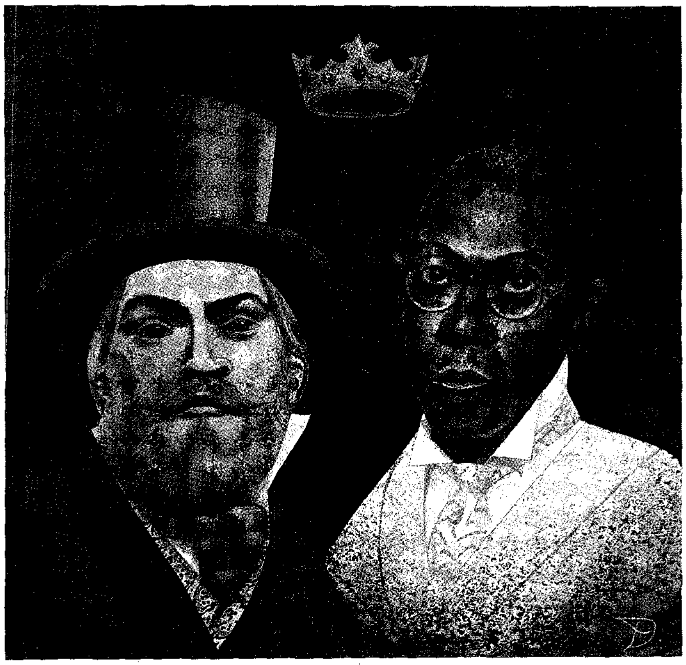
Broken Glass—A new play by Arthur Miller, with Ron Rifkin, Amy Irving, and David Dukes. John Tillinger directed. Previews through April 23. Opens April 24 at 6:45. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Christina Alberta’s Father—A new musical by Polly Pen, based on a 1925 novel by H. G. Wells. Previews begin April 21. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting two one-acts by Lanford Wilson, collectively titled “Moonshot and Cosmos.” In previews. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200.)

An Inspector Calls—The Royal National Theatre production of J. B. Priestley’s mystery thriller, with Rosemary Harris, Kenneth Cranham, and Philip Bosco. Directed by Stephen Daldry. In previews. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Operettas—The Village Light Opera Group presents “The Merry Widow,” by Franz Lehár, April 23-24 and April 28-May 1. (Haft Auditorium, Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. 279-4200.) . . . ¶ A single performance of “Trial by Jury,” by the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players, on April 24 at 3. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)



Michael Stuhlbarg and André Braugher in “Richard II.”

BLAIR DRAWSON

Passion—Stephen Sondheim’s new musical, with a book by James Lapine, who also directed. Donna Murphy, Jere Shea, and Marin Mazzie lead the cast. In previews. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Picnic—A revival of William Inge’s play, by the Roundabout Theatre Company. The cast includes Ashley Judd, Kyle Chandler, Larry Bryggman, Debra Monk, and Polly Holliday. Directed by Scott Ellis. Two previews on April 20. Opens April 21 at 7. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

The Rise and Fall of Little Voice—Hynden Walch portrays a painfully shy woman with a remarkable singing voice in this play by Jim Cartwright. A Steppenwolf Theatre Company production. In previews. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Sally Marr . . . and Her Escorts—Joan Rivers stars in a play about the mother of Lenny Bruce. Written by Ms. Rivers, Erin Sanders, and Lonny Price. In previews. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Winter’s Tale—The Royal Shakespeare Company presents the Bard’s comedy, with Suzanne Burden, Mark Hadfield, Gemma Jones, and John Nettles. Opens April 20 at 8 and runs through April 24. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

OPENED RECENTLY

All in the Timing—Six sparkling short plays by David Ives add up to one enchanted evening. The playwright is a master both of wordplay and of the comic possibilities of the human predicament. Ives and the deft director, Jason McConnell Buzas, are wonderfully served by their actors, especially Robert Stanton and Nancy Opel, who possess the energy of Mickey and Judy and the profound goofiness of Sid and Imogene. Wendy Lawless, Ted Neustadt, and Michael Countryman do their part to keep the proceedings cruising along at top speed. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

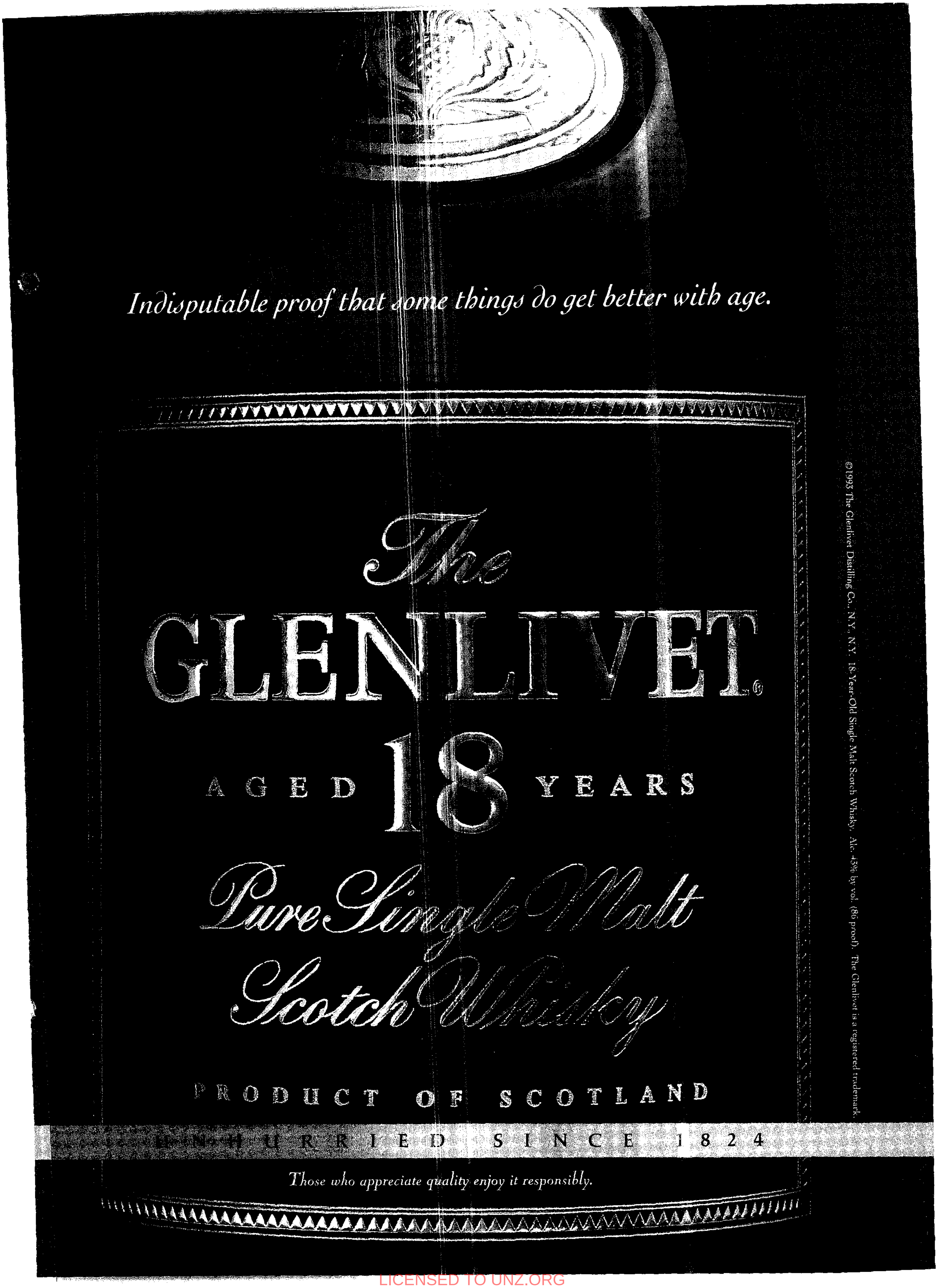
Amphigorey: A Musicale—Fifteen Edward Gorey stories set to music. With sets by Mr. Gorey, of course, and a score by Peter Golub. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 777-7474.)

Beauty and the Beast—The long-awaited musical juggernaut, based on the 1991 Disney movie, features the songs of Alan Menken and Howard Ashman, as well as a few new ones by Mr. Menken and Tim Rice. With Susan Egan, Terrence Mann, Burke Moses, and Tom Bosley. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100.)

Blown Sideways Through Life—In her sixty-fifth job, Claudia Shear charmingly and observantly tells us about her previous sixty-four, which have ranged from working in a hardware store to being a “phone girl” at a whorehouse, with a stint as a Bloomingdale’s cosmetics salesgirl thrown in. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2285.)

Brothers of the Brush—This first effort by Jimmy Murphy, a Dublin housepainter turned playwright, concerns the mutual suspicion among three housepainters in Dublin and the penny-pinching contractor they work for. The theme is the destructiveness of the every-man-for-himself ethos, but there’s plenty of comic byplay to leaven the proceedings. With Ronan Carr, Paul Mc Grane, Paul Ronan, and Mickey Kelly; directed by Nye Heron. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Carousel—Nicholas Hytner’s authoritative direction combines with Bob Crowley’s inspired sets to transplant the National Theatre’s 1993 smash hit onto the Vivian Beaumont stage. Bold, beautiful, and controversial, this multicultural reinterpretation launches Rodgers and Hammerstein toward the twenty-first century. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)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THE THEATRE-Cont'd

Damn Yankees—The big musical hit of 1955 (nine Tonys) is back, in its first Broadway revival, with Victor Garber as the Devil and Bebe Neuwirth as Lola. George Abbott and Douglass Wallop's book has been jarringly updated by the director, Jack O'Brien (with the help of the hundred-and-six-year-old Mr. Abbott). The result is a vehicle that swerves between fifties stodginess and nineties cynicism. But the cast delivers Richard Adler and Jerry Ross's music with sporty energy, and Rob Marshall has created some lively dance numbers. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/4/94.) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Fallen Angel—Corey Glover has the lead in this play about a rock band, written by Billy Boesky, who also wrote some songs for the show. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

Family Secrets—Sherry Glaser is the sole, physically adept, very funny performer in this comedy about a Jewish family, which she wrote with Greg Howells. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Flowering Peach—The National Actors Theatre's sleepy production of Clifford Odets' 1954 play. With Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson, and Josh Mostel. (4/4/94) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280. Closes April 24.)

Four Dogs and a Bone—The "bone" of John Patrick Shanley's satiric comedy is a movie, and the "four dogs" are its producer, writer, and two actresses, who together make the funniest foursome in town. (11/15/93) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Fragments—The Signature Theatre Company winds up its Edward Albee season with his most recent full-length play. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200.)

Hide Your Love Away: The Ballad of Brian Epstein—Kevin Scott's play about the Beatles' manager takes place in 1967. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

Jackie Mason: Politically Incorrect—The comedian/commentator's new one-man show. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jewish Repertory Theatre—Presenting "Teibele and Her Demon," a 1979 play by Isaac Bashevis Singer and Eve Friedman, based on Mr. Singer's story of the same title. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes May 1.)

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat—A considerably pumped-up version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's first musical, with former soap star Michael Damian in the title role. The Bible was never like this. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Laughter on the 23rd Floor—Neil Simon's twenty-seventh Broadway play, about a group of writers for a fictionalized version of "Your Show of Shows," is one of his finest comic efforts. Directed by Jerry Zaks, with Mark Linn-Baker, Lewis J. Stadlen, Nathan Lane, Ron Orbach, John Slattery, and J. K. Simmons. (12/20/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Medea—Diana Rigg returns to Broadway in London's Almeida Theatre production of Euripides' play. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The Mollusc—A turn-of-the-century English social satire by Hubert Henry Davies. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes May 8.)

Mort Sahl's America—The political humorist, in a solo engagement. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Movieland—In Everett Quinton's latest outing, Mr. Q. plays a character called Ruby Stevens (attention, non-campers: that's Barbara Stanwyck's real name), who frenetically acts out parts in half a dozen old movies, including "The Spiral Staircase," "The Ten Commandments," and "Madame X" ("the blondest movie ever made"), in an attempt to placate a dragon that's threatening her life. You have to admire Ruby's resourcefulness in using a Clorox bottle as Pharaonic headgear, but the dragon has a point. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Hynden Walch in "The Rise and Fall of Little Voice."

MICHAEL WITTE

My Fair Lady—Howard Davies' genial new production of the Lerner and Loewe musical. With Melissa Errico as Eliza Doolittle and Michael Moriarty as Professor Henry Higgins. (1/17/94) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Panorama—A 1987 play by Pieter-Dirk Uys. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 564-7893. Closes April 24.)

Pounding Nails in the Floor with My Forehead—The latest solo show by the boss of monologuists, Eric Bogosian. (2/21/94) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 307-4100. Closes April 24.)

Reel to Real—Mabou Mines presents a play by Frederick Neumann, which incorporates a film about a play. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Closes April 24.)

Richard II—Shakespeare's history play, with Michael Stuhlbarg and André Braugher. (4/18/93) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes May 1.)

Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants—With a Mephistophelean smoothness, the master sleight-of-hand artist discourses on the history of trickery and performs illusions that will amaze even those who wouldn't normally go out of their way to see card tricks. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Shaker Heights—A comedy by Quincy Long. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

She Loves Me—The Roundabout's production of the 1963 Bock-Harnick-Masteroff musical. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Stomp—A group of eight British rhythm specialists who use unconventional percussion instruments. The noise is terrific. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Three Tall Women—A moving, poetic play by Edward Albee, which just won the Pulitzer Prize. Myra Carter, Marian Seldes, and Jordan Baker represent three generations of women trying to sort out their pasts. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

The Triumph of Love—A production of Marivaux's 1732 romantic farce, in a witty new translation by James Magruder. The actors are entirely credible in their ridiculous roles, and, under Michael Mayer's deft direction, physical comedy and clever lines get equal billing. With Margaret Welsh, Camryn Manheim, and Thom Christopher. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992—Anna Deavere Smith's one-woman show, seen recently at the Public Theatre. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Who Will Carry the Word?—Charlotte Delbo, a survivor of Auschwitz, wrote this play about women in the death camps. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

ANGELS IN AMERICA: "Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika." (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **BEAU JEST:** Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLOOD BROTHERS:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE SISTERS ROSENSWEIG:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Life Underwater—A theatrical work in progress written by John Cale, of Velvet Underground fame, which incorporates film and 3-D slide projections by Zoe Beloff. With the Soldier String Quartet and four vocalists, as well as Cale, his daughter Eden, and Ann Magnuson (who contributed to the script). (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. April 22-23 at 8.)

Yacub: Mad Scientist or Genius—A comic theatre-video work about race, by Homer Jackson. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-7100. April 23 at 7:30 and April 24 at 3.)

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—The spring season opens with "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. April 25-26 at 8. Through June 4.)

Scapino Ballet Rotterdam—Performing a full-length work titled "Kathleen." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 20-22 at 8, April 23 at 2 and 8, and April 24 at 2 and 7:30.)

Donna Uchizono—In "Angels on Granite," an evening of choreographed and improvisational pieces, with cellist Tom Cora and guest artist Nikki Castro. (Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, Park Ave. at 42nd St. April 20 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. Seating on a first-come, first-served basis.)

Vivian Trimble—With nine dancers and the band Luscious Jackson in "Easy," a piece based on such dances as the Hustle and the Shake. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. April 21-23 at 8 and April 24 at 3.)

Laura Dean Musicians and Dancers—The opening performance of a one-week engagement: "Ecstasy" (New York première), "Infinity" (New York première), and "Sky Light." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 26 at 8. Through May 1.)

NIGHT LIFE

Mali High

SALIF KEITA was born in Mali, in West Africa, forty-five years ago, the son of a wealthy landowner. He is an albino, which is traditionally associated with bad luck in his homeland, a piece of folklore he made short work of: since embarking on a solo career in the eighties, the singer—who first achieved renown with the Malian folk-rumba group Les Ambassadeurs—has become one of West Africa's most popular musical exports. Like the Senegalese star Youssou N'Dour, who has enjoyed rewarding collaborations with Peter Gabriel and others, Keita has used his cachet to team up with some noted jazz and pop musicians. On his 1991 studio LP, "Amen," he enlisted saxophonist Wayne Shorter and keyboardist Joe Zawinul, co-founders of the seminal fusion band Weather Report, and guitar hero Carlos Santana. The album was a breezy hybrid of rock and African folk with the reggae accents that have become universal in world music. It was the first recording by an African bandleader to receive a Grammy nomination.

Last month, Keita released a retrospective collection called "The Mansa of Mali," which he's now promoting with his first extended American tour. The compilation documents the singer's virtuosity, as he lends his fluid, wide-ranging tenor to sensuous and eclectic grooves that incorporate soulful harmonies, brilliant guitar and horn work, and masterly percussion. At Irving Plaza on April 20, he'll reënact these excursions with a nine-piece band. Keita's lyrics are primarily in Bambara, but, as the Beninese singer Angelique Kidjo once observed, his passion needs no translation. "I don't speak his language, but . . . I can feel the emotion in his voice," Kidjo remarked. "When he hits a note, it's like someone giving you an upper cut—you really feel it."

CONCERTS

"THE NEW LEGACY"—The generation gap closes for this Carnegie Hall Jazz Band concert, with young and youngish guest stars—Joshua Redman, Nicholas Payton, and T. S. Monk—paying homage to some of their renowned elders, including James Moody, Doc Cheatham, and Panama Francis. Showing both the twenty-four-year-old Redman and the eighty-nine-year-old Cheatham in peak form will no doubt make a case for the glowing good health of today's jazz scene. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 21 at 8.)

RICHARD THOMPSON BAND—Thompson has been around steadily since the late sixties, when he helped revolutionize the English folk scene with the group Fairport Convention. In the seventies, he and his then wife, Linda Thompson, made a series of stunning confessional albums. More recently, Thompson has reinvented himself as a successful solo artist. His current record, "Mirror Blue," is the work of a veteran minstrel in top form, combining witty jigs with ruefully passionate ballads, and offering a generous share of sublimely knotty guitar work. Anyone who has seen Thompson live knows that his personality hath charms to rival his music; his between-song banter alone is worth the price of admission. David Wilcox will open. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 23 at 8.)

NOA—An Israeli singer, accompanied by guitarist Gil Dor. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 20 at 8.)

FRANK SINATRA—Appearing with the Count Basie Orchestra. Don Rickles opens. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. April 20 and April 22-24 at 8.)

EMMYLOU HARRIS AND THE NASH RAMBLERS—In a benefit concert. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. April 21 at 7.)

REBA MCENTIRE—With John Michael Montgomery and Faith Hill. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. April 22 at 8.)

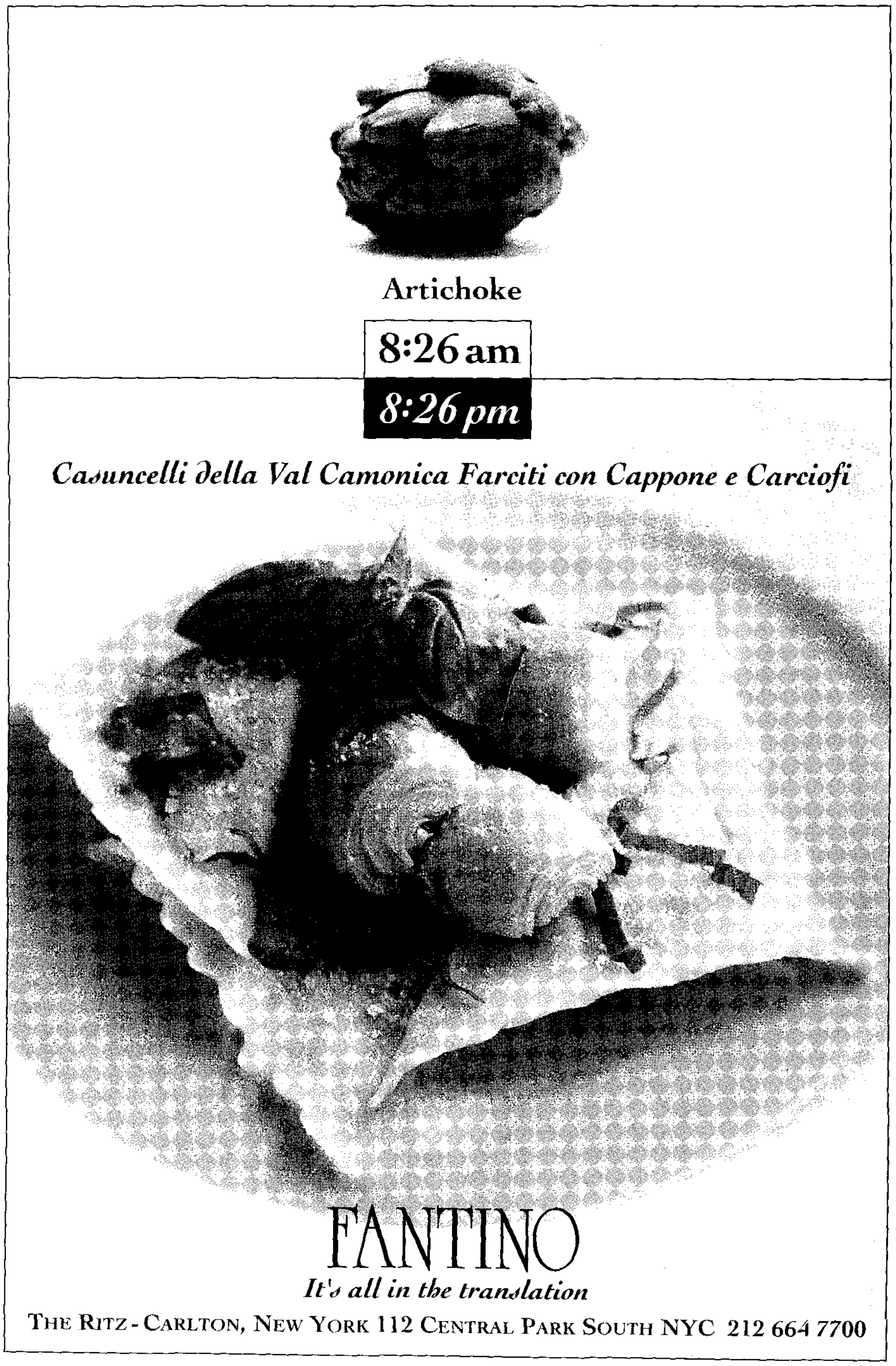
CARNEGIE HALL FOLK FESTIVAL—The third in a series of five concerts. "Circus Blues": performers who once worked in sideshows, including the ninety-one-year-old blues shouter/gospel singer Diamond Teeth Mary and blues vocalists Guitar Gabriel, the Snake Lady, and Blind Willie James. Ward Hall is the m.c. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 22 at 8. Through April 30.)

RUSH—With Candlebox. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. April 22 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. April 23 at 8.)

ENRICO MACIAS—The Algerian-born French singer. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. April 23 at 8:30.)

NEW YORK THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY—Barry Baker plays light classics and show tunes in the former Brooklyn Paramount Theatre. (Schwartz Athletic Center, Long Island University's Brooklyn campus, Flatbush and DeKalb Aves. April 24 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the performance.)

"IN CELEBRATION OF LIFE 3"—A benefit concert by cabaret singers and show folk, including Laurie Beechman, Ann Hampton Callaway, Jeff Harnar, Nathan Lane, James Naughton, and Julie Wilson. (Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Columbus Ave. at 59th St. April 24 at 8. For information about tickets, call 978-9390.)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JAZZ AND BLUES

Apollo, 253 W. 125th St. (864-0372)—Wednesday is Amateur Night at the Apollo, a continuation of the legendary show that launched the careers of Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Billie Holiday. Vocalists, dancers, musicians, and comedians take the stage.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. **BOB JAMES** is in through April 24. Starting April 26: **TERENCE BLANCHARD** drops in for a week. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—**PHILIP HARPER** continues through April 23. The popular Harper Brothers band is now a memory, but its trumpeter plays on, broadening his scope and sound with each new venture. Pianist **NORMAN SIMMONS,** one of the great accompanists, and bassist **RICHIE GOODS** will also be on hand. Beginning April 25: saxophonist **GARY BARTZ.** Bartz's resurgence is a jazz feel-good tale for the nineties: a real comer from the glory days of the late sixties returns with all his powers intact and added emotional reserves to boot. On a good night, when he's inspired to flaunt his unparalleled harmonic knowledge and dive-bomber drive, Bartz can be nothing less than staggering. Dining.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—Thursday nights belong to **GIANT STEP,** a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop. On April 22-23: Cuban percussion master **CARLOS (PATATO) VALDEZ.**

Down Beat, 101 Seventh Ave. S. (620-4000)—A long, warm, wood-panelled room with upholstered banquettes, a nicely appointed bar, and a reliable roster of jazz names. Murals of Diz, Bird, and Basie adorn the walls, so the players are always in good company. **RACHEL Z** continues through April 24. This pianist, a fresh face on the jazz scene, is a promising modernist with brisk responses and an alert ear for concise melody.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—The **RICHIE COLE** quintet performs April 20-24. The **SCOTT HAMILTON** quintet arrives on April 26. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar and lounge, hidden inside the Time Café, with satin couches and mosaic tables. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom, this jazz club is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpeting in the V.I.P. room upstairs. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. **STEVE KUHN** and **DAVID FINCK** are here through April 23.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—This club, run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, specializes in all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmosphere is low-key, low-budget bohemian. **DEFUNKT** shakes the rafters on April 21-23. **JOHN ZORN'S COBRA** entertains on April 24.

Metropolis, 31 Union Square W. (675-2300)—The basement space in this swank café is now hosting a series of high-profile jazz gigs. The **LEE KONITZ** quartet performs on April 22-23, with Peggy Stern on piano. The cool, dulcet-toned musings that brought altoist Konitz to fame are long gone. He roughs up his sound these days, but his celebrated melodic logic is as strict and satisfying as ever.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Tuesdays belong to Jim Lawyer and his Bluebird Society Orchestra; Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band; Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and Sam Ulano and his Bourbon Street Swingers; and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. Jazz diva **DIANNE REEVES** appears on April 20-21. On April 25: **EDDIE PALMIERI** swings by. April 29-30: Music of Martinique with **MALAVOI.** Closed Sundays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through April 24: tenor saxophonist **JAVON JACKSON.** Jackson's latest CD, "When the Time Is Right," has all the assurance of a coming-of-age statement; using key players from that recording—pianist **JACKY TERRASSON,** bassist **PETER WASHINGTON,** and drummer **CARL ALLEN**—Jackson seems poised for a breakthrough with this gig. Dining.

Richard Thompson at the Beacon Theatre.

LEE EDWARD WOLFF

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—This legendary tourist haven makes serious jazz fans welcome in the Chestnut Room. It resembles a hunting lodge and is every bit as over the top as the rest of the establishment, but the bookings are impressive. Start spreading the news: **FRANK SINATRA, JR.,** plays the midnight show through April 23, with the **DOROTHY DONEGAN** trio.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through April 24: the **DAVID MURRAY** quartet. Murray's voluminous approach to recording tends to make some folks take him for granted. Onstage, the stalwart tenor saxophonist and bass clarinettist remains a force to be reckoned with. Even at his most furious, Murray always makes his solos sing; the avant-garde squeals and outside tonal excursions never obscure his bighearted romanticism. The **GEORGE COLEMAN** quartet starts on April 26. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. Drummer **MARVIN (SMITTY) SMITH** fronts a septet through April 23. On Monday evenings, the **MARIA SCHNEIDER** big band holds court. Schneider, who is becoming a Visiones institution, weaves thick harmonic textures, while allowing plenty of space for some choice soloists.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and wondered about. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Beginning April 25: **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE.** Tapping into the contemporary wellspring created by Tyner, Hancock, and Evans, pianist Brackeen has fashioned an engaging personal sound. Everything she touches, from American songbook standards and Brazilian melodies to her own modernist pieces, is stamped with jazz authority. Like an old married couple, she and McBee, her sometime bassist, seem to read each other's minds, completing each other's musical sentences.

STANDARDS AND CABARET

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Talk about extended runs: the Algonquin booked **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** for sixteen weeks last year, and now she's back for another eleven. She'll be ranging through golden-age standards and more up-to-date material during April; in May, the engagement turns into an Irving Berlin tribute. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Cabaret legend **BLOSSOM DEARIE** presents an early show (6:30) on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through April 23, designing woman **DIXIE CARTER.** . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano.

Eighty-Eight's, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—Former disco diva **VICKI SUE ROBINSON** is in on April 22. Singer **MARY FOSTER CONKLIN** entertains on April 23.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble now in its twentieth year. The rest of the week, **VERNEL BAGNERIS** presents "Hoo-Dude," his tribute to Jelly Roll Morton. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **ANNIE ROSS** finishes her engagement on April 23. In jazz circles, Ross is best known as one third of the innovative fifties vocal trio Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross, but her long and varied career also encompasses cabaret, theatre, and film. Her current act draws on all these credits, ranging from standards to songs from the soundtrack of the 1993 movie "Short Cuts," in which she portrayed an over-the-hill alcoholic jazz singer. Fortunately, at sixty-three, Ross herself is still in top form. Closed Mondays.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—**SPIDER SALOFF** and **RICKY RITZEL** are upstairs in the cabaret on April 24. Dining.

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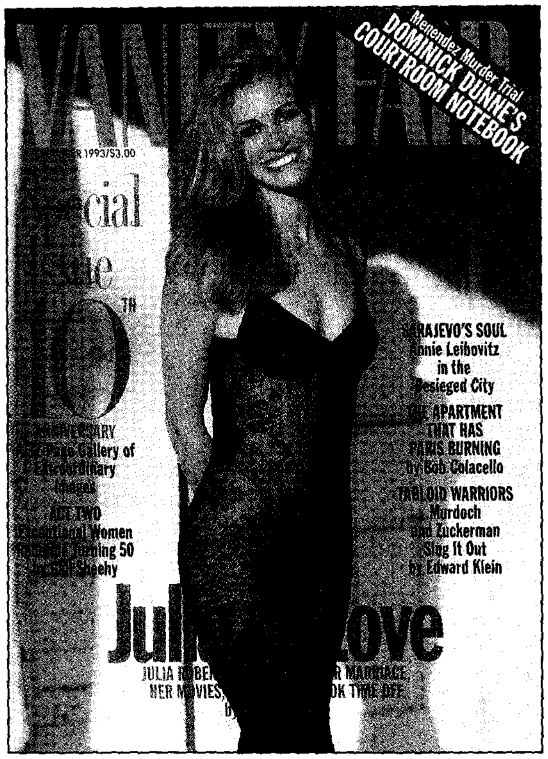
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ROCK AND FOLK

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Decent sight lines, great greasy food, prodigiously talented waitresses, and a consistent roster of high-quality acts. On April 21, a double bill of brooding intelligent songs and blues harmonica with **John Martyn** and **Charlie Musselwhite.** April 22: **Aztec Two Step.** On April 23, singer-songwriter **John Wesley Harding.** Rock goddess **Darlene Love** entertains every Tuesday night.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront, Sin-é is usually given over to a young, earthy crowd that drinks Rolling Rock or espresso and waits for some Irish musician or other to blow in and play a set. Guitarist **Byron Estep** appears on April 21.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. **Wool** is in on April 22. . . . ¶ The club is now flanked by a bar and performance space called CB's Gallery.

Flannery's, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A low-ceilinged space that looks like a rec room; on weekends it's home to an enlightened mixture of garage-rock, rockabilly, surf-punk, and psychedelic-rock bands.

Grand, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—A serious room for serious rock-and-rolling. You can either vibrate up front, near a wall-o'-speakers, or lounge around the bar in the back and follow the show on a video monitor. On April 21: **Maggie Estep** headlines an evening of spoken-word performances, with Samantha Coerbell, Edwin Torres, and Bobby Miller. Estep is among the most talked-about young artists emerging in this genre, in which Generation X meets the Beat poets. She'll be backed by her musical group, I Love Everybody. The alternative band Babe the Blue Ox will also appear. April 23: It's hardcore night, with **Carnivore** and **Sheer Terror.** April 26: The **Ohio Players** and **Jazzhole** appear. The Players are perhaps best remembered for the seventies classic "Love Rollercoaster" and for their extremely smutty record covers. Jazzhole is a new collective that mixes harmonically sophisticated jazz with hip-hop and rap.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. April 20: **Salif Keita.** April 21: **Kristin Hersh.** A graduate of the postmodern girl group Throwing Muses, Hersh recently released "Hips and Makers," a spare acoustic solo album emphasizing the creepy charms of her like-it-or-not voice, which many college-rock fans seem to like a lot. The **Charlatans** are here on April 22-23. The Charlatans emerged several years back as part of British rock's Manchester scene, dabbling in the psychedelic guitar textures, hip-hop beats, and bad clothes that defined pop culture in the seventies. On their new album, "Up to Our Hips," the Charlatans sound as if they've been listening to less George Clinton and more Smokey Robinson. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. Former Playboy bunny and Missing Persons vocalist **Dale Bozzio** drops in on April 21. The **Reverend Horton Heat** arrives on April 24. Having begun his career by playing guitar in a Texas juvenile correctional facility, the Reverend Mr. Heat has for the past seven years entertained audiences across the country with his Vegas-style stage antics and the irreverent sermons he delivers between songs. What other roots rocker can list among his credits opening for Dolly Parton *and* stage diving for the Cramps?

RADIO WEST 43RD STREET

The heavy-rotation playlist on our own hit parade.

All Apologies (Nirvana, "In Utero").

Funny How Time Slips Away (Al Green & Lyle Lovett, "Rhythm Country and Blues").

The More You Ignore Me, the Closer I Get (Morrissey, "Vauxhall and I").

Let's Get Married (The Proclaimers, "Hit the Highway").

What a Crying Shame (The Mavericks, "What a Crying Shame").

This Is Hell (Elvis Costello, "Brutal Youth").

Cool, Clear Water (Bonnie Raitt, "Longing in Their Hearts").

Strawberry Road (Sam Phillips, "Martinis & Bikinis").

The Way That It Shows (Richard Thompson, "Mirror Blue").

No Excuses (Alice in Chains, "Jar of Flies").

Fell on Black Days (Soundgarden, "Superunknown").

March of the Pigs (Nine Inch Nails, "The Downward Spiral").

The Millionaire's Holiday (Combustible Edison, "I, Swinger").

Getto Jam (Domino, "Domino").

Freeborn Man (Junior Brown, "12 Shades of Brown").

Let's Take a Trip Together (Morphine, "Cure for Pain").

Five-O (James, "Laid").

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **Beat Rodeo,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A Hoboken landmark. The **Silos,** who play here on April 21, are based in New York City, but they play the kind of grainy folk-rock that's usually associated with Midwestern bands like the BoDeans and the Jayhawks. To add to the geographical ambiguity, Walter Salas-Humara—the Silos' singer-songwriter-guitarist-producer-leader—is a Cuban-American who grew up in Florida. Although the Silos aren't exactly a household name, their new album, "Susan Across the Ocean," is a typically fine collection by a band that should be better known.

New Music Café, 380 Canal St. (941-0900)—A big, high-ceilinged, broad-windowed place, where the conversations tend to be boisterous and the bands even more so. On April 23: **Chucklehead,** whose ebullient blue-eyed funk has attracted a sizable cult following.

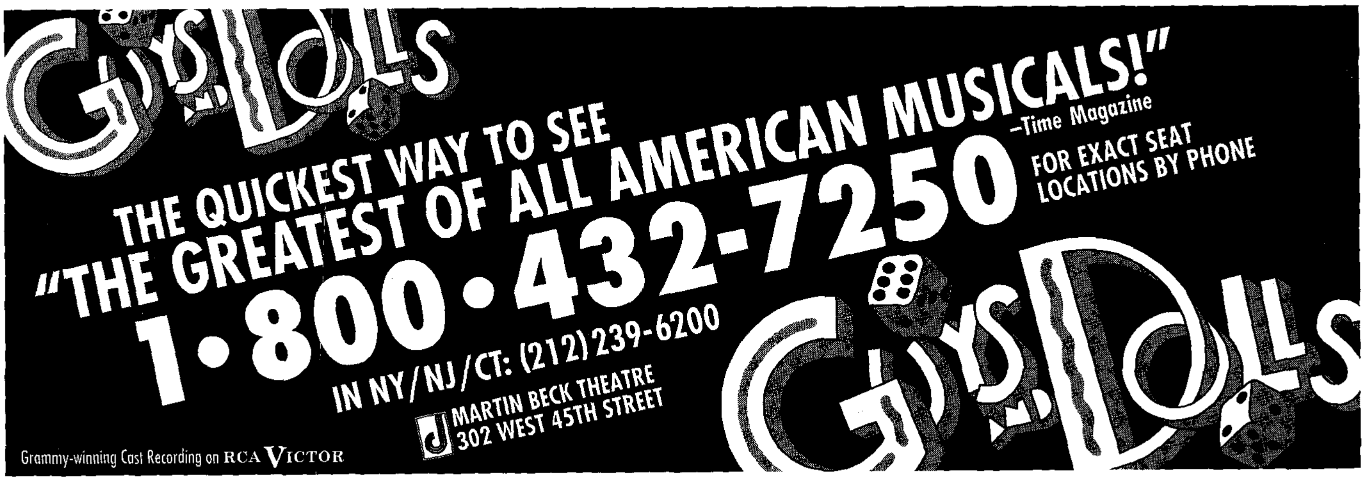
Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 495 Second Ave., at 28th St. (686-1210)—**Black 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights. When there's no live music, the jukebox blasts everything from the Chieftains to Greg Trooper to Paddy Reilly, the Irish folksinger who owns the place.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week: another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit. On April 20, catch Chuck D's favorite hardcore band, **Anthrax.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—April 20-21: Catch the Irish comedian **Niall Toibin,** who resembles Jackie Mason with a brogue. On April 26, the original members of the **Gap Band** make their first New York appearance in ten years. **Groove Collective,** a promising young jazz/hip-hop outfit, opens. . . . ¶ Next door, at Tramps Café, **Billy Boy Arnold** is in on April 23-24.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—The **Brian Setzer** orchestra appears on April 26. Setzer, the former Stray Cat vocalist, seems to have abandoned the familiar rockabilly turf that briefly made him famous and is now performing with a sharp seventeen-piece big band that punctuates his smooth crooning with jazzy horn charts and café-orchestra rhythms.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A warehouse complex for neo-hippies and other party animals. The **Silos** are here on April 20, right before their Maxwell's gig. Appearing with them are the **Schramms** and sweet-voiced folksinger **Kate Jacobs.** On April 22: local legends **Urban Blight.**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ART

Setting the Scene

IN the foyer of the Luhring Augustine gallery (130 Prince Street; through May 7), Jack Pierson has installed what looks like a fragment of an artist's studio. A wooden folding chair with a pale-blue silk shirt draped over it sits on a low black platform. There are a few other forlorn human traces—an empty paper cup, some cigarette butts, footprints in the dust. This subtly haunted mise en scène is called "What you take with you and what you leave behind," and it clues us in to the wavering, stifled lyricism of Pierson's art. Since his first solo show, in 1990, Pierson has used various mediums to create what appear to be the stage sets for a drama that takes place only in the mind of the viewer. We are asked to imagine the artist, his milieu, his desires; in the process, we may be led to reflect on the structures of our own fantasies.

A slender filament unifies the rest of the material in Pierson's current show, which consists primarily of photographs and works on paper. Maybe it's the artist's mood, or just his attitude toward purposely vague, evanescent subjects. A suite of oil-stick drawings is completely abstract—smudges in various shades of blue—and yet each bears a suggestive personal title: "I brought it all on myself," "$400. Monte Carlo blues," "Why did he leave me," etc. A few large-scale color photographs—of palm trees, showgirls, a sultry Euro girl smoking a cigarette—serve as imagistic anchors for the prevailing abstract reveries.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Divine Protection: Batak Art of North Sumatra." Seventy primarily wooden works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ranging from a three-inch-square ritual book to staffs and puppets. Opens April 22. . . . ¶ Eighteen new permanent galleries devoted to the art of South and Southeast Asia have recently opened. Ancient India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia, among other nations and cultures, are represented. . . . ¶ "Petrus Christus: Renaissance Master of Bruges." A disciple of Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, who lived in the mid-fifteenth century, was one of the first Flemish painters to incorporate the Italian convention of one-point perspective into his work. . . . ¶ Twenty-seven paintings by Sidney Nolan (1917-92), an Australian who chronicled the adventures of his countryman Ned Kelly, a nineteenth-century outlaw. . . . ¶ "Waist Not," a Costume Institute exhibit, proposes that the waist is the defining element of the fashion silhouette, offering examples from the eighteenth century to the present. While it's a thin excuse for a show, there are interesting elements, like the showcase of eighteenth-century busks embellished with risqué carvings and romantic verse: "How I envy you the happiness that is yours, resting softly on her ivory white breast. Let us divide between us, if you please, this glory. You will be there the day and I shall be there the night." A Jane Fonda exercise tape

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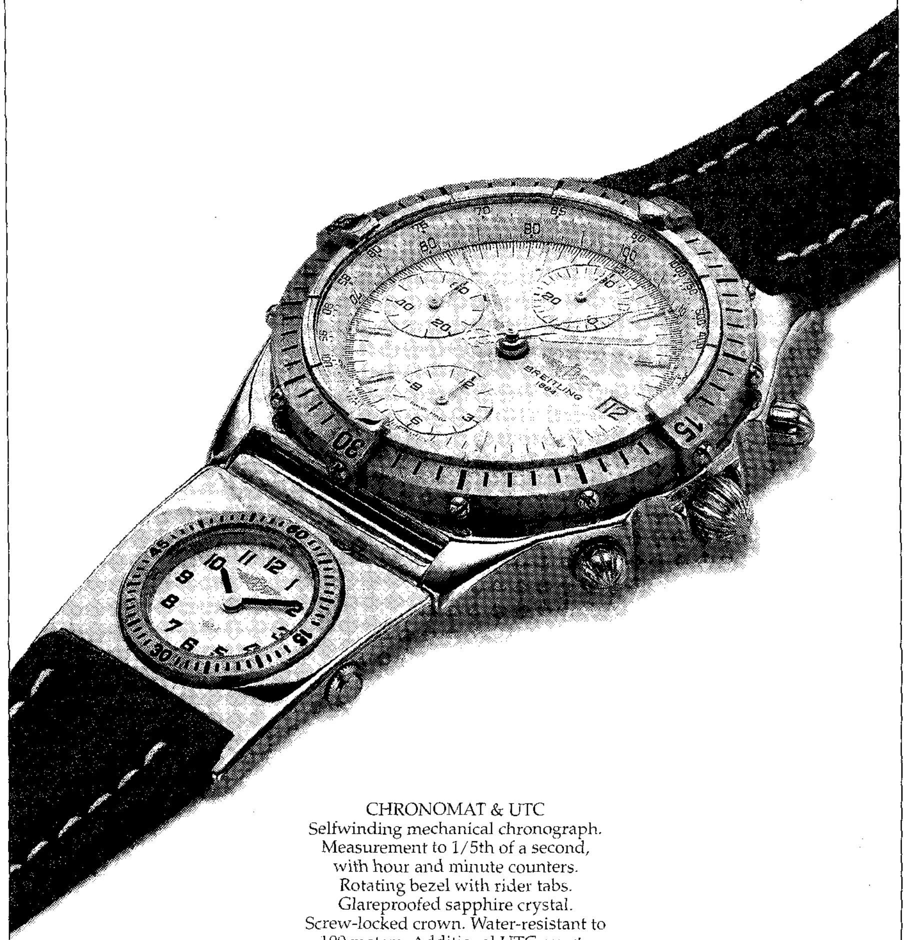

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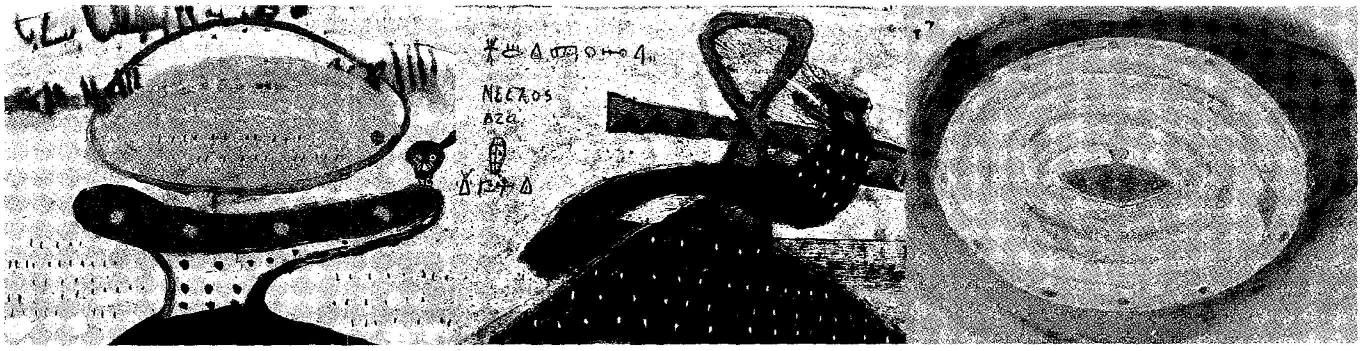
provides the audio. Paris bad boy Jean-Paul Gaultier's clownlike oversized pants offer a contrast to the rest of the cinched-in show. . . . ¶ "The Decorative Arts of Frank Lloyd Wright." Furniture, ceramics, textiles, sculpture, architectural fragments, photographs, stained glass, metalwork, and drawings. (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum.) . . . ¶ Paintings and drawings from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth by Caspar David Friedrich and Ferdinand Hodler, among others. Through April 24. . . . ¶ "The Golden Age of Danish Painting." Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersburg (1785-1853) and Christen Købke (1810-48) are represented by portraits and landscapes. Through April 24. . . . ¶ "Immortals and Sages: Fusuma Paintings from Ryoan-ji and the Lore of China in Japanese Art." Through April 24. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Bernard Tschumi: Architecture and Event." Models and drawings of six projects. Part of the museum's Thresholds series. Opens April 21. . . . ¶ Selections from the museum's collection of American Surrealist Photography, including work by Maya Deren, Clarence John Laughlin, George Platt Lynes, Frederick Sommer, Val Telberg, and Edmund Teske. . . . ¶ The fourth exhibition in the Artist's Choice series features John Baldessari's images, which are based on details of photographic reproductions of works in the museum's collection. Single original paintings by Henri Rousseau, Andy Warhol, and Andrew Wyeth, among others, are also on view. Through May 10. . . . ¶ "Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect." A retrospective, beginning with material from the eighteen-eighties. (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Metropolitan Museum and the Guggenheim Museum.) Through May 10. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)



Self-portrait by Ouattara (Museum for African Art).

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Women on the Edge: Twenty Photographers in Europe, 1910-39" provides an antidote to the many historical surveys that have overlooked women who contributed to this fertile, influential period in European photography. The variety of intentions (from advertising to art) and the heterogeneity of styles make for a wide-ranging tour of the era's dynamics, from the work of well-known photographers like Florence Henri and Lucia Moholy to pages from Irene Bayer's personal photo albums. . . . ¶ "Frank Lloyd Wright's Designs for the Guggenheim Museum." (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.) . . . ¶ "Robert Morris: The Mind/Body Problem," a retrospective exhibition, explores the intellectual underpinnings of this protean artist through a selection of his sculptures, drawings, and videos from the early sixties to the present. Morris's career touches on many of the important artistic developments of the last thirty years, confounding expectations of aesthetic unity or continuity. Through May 1. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—"Rolywholyover A Circus." John Cage (1912-1992) took his title from Joyce's "Finnegans Wake" and used, among other things, a computerized version of the "I Ching" to create a circus. Cage said of the project, "The basic idea is that the exhibition would change so much that if you came back a second time, you wouldn't recognize it." It includes a rotating exhibit of work by fifty artists, including Rauschenberg and Joseph Cornell; *enso* scrolls; an interactive computer installation; an object each from the permanent collections of several New York museums; and a media space. Opens April 23. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of more than two hundred paintings and works on paper by Joseph Stella (1877-1946), the American futurist. Opens April 22. (There is a concurrent show of Stella's paintings at York gallery.) . . . ¶ A lobby exhibit of Isamu Noguchi's early abstract sculptures and drawings. Opens April 21. . . . ¶ "Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944-94." This retrospective includes photographs of Isak Dinesen (1959) and Francis Bacon (1979). (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Fine art ("Watson and the Shark," by John Singleton Copley), casts of fossils, and a sample of items that have been found in fishes' bellies—armor, hubcaps, a fur coat—are a few of the items in "Sharks! Fact and Fantasy." There's also a walk-through diorama with lighting and ambient sound that make you think you're underwater. Through May 1. . . . ¶ "Waura: Drawings of the Waura Indians of Brazil" is an exhibit of illustrations by members of this Amazon tribe, who were encouraged by an anthropologist to put onto paper images they traditionally use in body painting, pottery, basketry, and wood carving. Through April 24. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Louise Bourgeois: The Locus of Memory, Works 1982-93." An expanded version of the sculptor's 1993 Venice Biennale exhibit, with some twenty-five works made from Carrara marble, rubber, wood, bronze, steel, and glass. There are also thirty works on paper. Opens April 22. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway—"Komar & Melamid: People's Choice." After commissioning a poll of a thousand and one Americans about their preferences in art, these Russian artists have created a series of paintings that cater to the tastes reflected in the poll. Through April 23. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A thirty-eight-inch bronze Buddha from Thailand is the centerpiece of an exhibit of some fifty related sculptures. . . . ¶ "Asia/America: Identities in Contemporary Asian-American Art." The society's first exhibit of contemporary art includes paintings, sculptures, and photographs by twenty Asian-American artists. Of note is May Sun's "Fugitive Landing," an installation with English-language books about China on one side and, on the other side, a kind of Chinese fish pond cum trellis, with wooden footpaths and video images of Sun Yat-sen. Self-portraits of Tseng Kwong Chi in a Mao Tse-tung jacket, posing in front of such American icons as the Statue of Liberty and Mickey Mouse, are startling and both funny and serious. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Beyond the Borders: Art by Recent Immigrants" features thirty artists from more than twenty countries. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Photographs of nineteenth-century China by John Thomson (1837-1921). There's nothing artificial in these beautiful sepia-toned works, which capture everyday life in China in the eighteen-sixties. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Packaging the New: Design and the American Consumer 1925-75." A trip down short-term-memory lane, documenting the rise of industrial designers, who became indispensable to the quenching of America's thirst for new products. The pink Formica kitchen display looks like a perky old magazine advertisement come to life. The docents should look like Stepford wives. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St.—A new project, involving slides and audiotapes, by the Irish artist James Coleman will be shown along with the first installment of a three-part retrospective of his work. . . . ¶ Work by Katharina Fritsch, Dan Graham, and Ann Hamilton. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.) . . . ¶ At 393 West Broadway—Walter De Maria's "The Broken Kilometer." . . . ¶ At 141 Wooster St.—De Maria's "The New York Earth Room." (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Sèvres porcelain, Limoges enamel, and paintings by Vermeer, Rembrandt, Whistler, and El Greco are all on view in this former residence of Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919). (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Japan: A Cartographic Vision, European Printed Maps from the Early Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century." Some hundred and fifty maps and related material documenting Euro-

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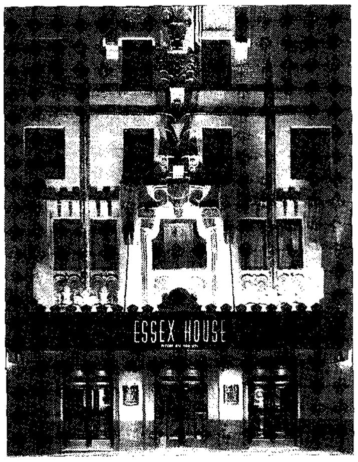

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JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History" chiefly uses documentary material—architectural models, designs, photographs, and video—to trace the development of these memorials in Europe, Israel, and the United States. The exhibit confronts us again and again with aesthetic choices—narrative versus abstraction, passionate immediacy versus austere recollection. Ultimately, this show proposes the memorial as a place for remembering rather than a repository for memories. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5:45; Tuesdays, 11 to 8.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—Letters from Theodore Roosevelt—a devoted father—to his son Quentin. Opens April 26. . . . ¶ Edward Burne-Jones's illustrations for "The Fairy Family" are the earliest known surviving drawings by this Pre-Raphaelite artist. . . . ¶ "Seeds of Discord: The Politics of Slavery" contains, among other historical materials, abolitionary writings by Washington, Madison, Emerson, Frederick Douglass, and John Quincy Adams, who, in an 1837 letter to the House of Representatives, demanded the retraction of a new "gag rule" forbidding the discussion of anti-slavery petitions. Through April 24. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

MUSEUM FOR AFRICAN ART, 593 Broadway—"Fusion: West African Artists at the Venice Biennale." Five artists from Senegal and the Ivory Coast, all of whom were selected for inclusion in the 1993 Venice Biennale. Particularly notable are Ouattara's mixed-media paintings/reliefs, which combine elements of traditional tribal culture with aesthetic strategies associated with the avant-garde movements of the West. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"New York Beauties: Quilts from the Empire State." Twenty or so quilts selected from approximately six thousand that were considered for this exhibit, including one made by the fiancée of a Union soldier, who survived the war but died a day before the wedding. Opens April 23. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Pride=Power!" marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion, in which patrons of a gay bar resisted arrest and harassment, triggering a series of riots and demonstrations. The exhibit includes photographs of the New York City Gay and Lesbian Pride March, posters, pennants, T-shirts, and other mementos. . . . ¶ "Modern Metropolis" includes more than two dozen vintage prints of New York, from the early part of this century. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Artist's Eye: Wayne Thiebaud." The painter has selected more than fifty paintings from the Academy's collection. Fifteen of Thiebaud's own pictures are also on exhibit. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Richard Long: Books, Prints, Printed Matter" is a display of the printed work of this British artist, who is known primarily for his sculpture. (Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, Lincoln Center—"Shared Journey: Jewish and African-American Concert Music." Focussing on the struggles of black and Jewish composers, the exhibit features original scores and photographs, as well as recordings of some of the scores on view. Through May 2.

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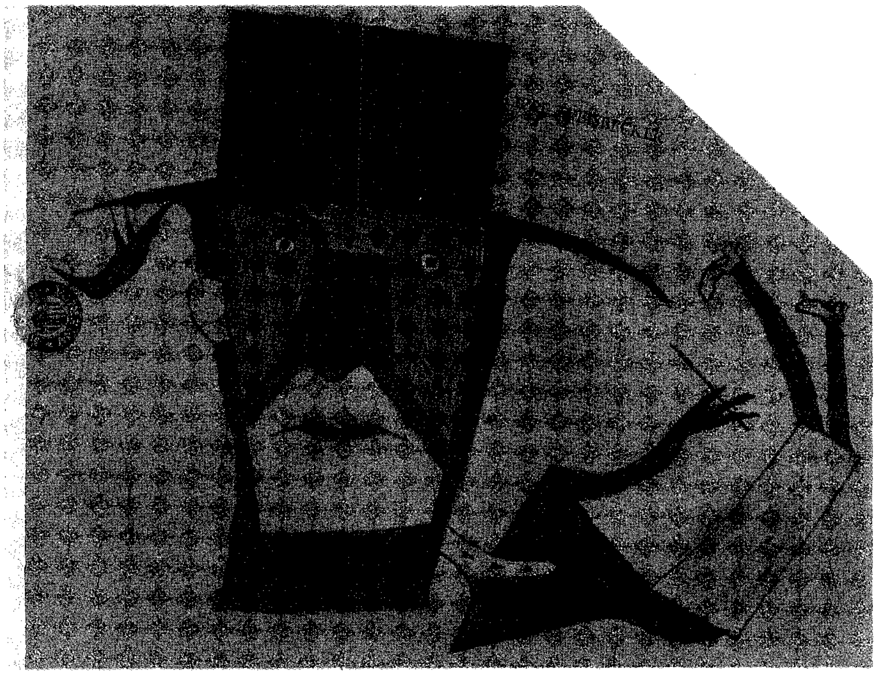

Bill Traylor at Davis & Langdale.

PHILIPPE WEISSBECKER

(Open Mondays and Thursdays, noon to 8; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Elizabeth Catlett: Works on Paper, 1944-1992." Representational prints. Through May 8. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following listings lead off with new shows.)

Will Barnet—Five paintings and a number of works on paper, documenting the artist's sixty-year career, from his early figurative work in the W.P.A. era to his geometric figurative style of the past fifteen years. Opens April 23. Through May 21. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Giorgio De Chirico (1888-1978)—Thirty paintings, plus drawings, by the Surrealist. Opens April 21. Through May 28. (Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert Graham—Eight sculptures of female nudes, cast either in bronze or concrete, with a variety of painted and patinated surfaces. Opens April 21. Through June 4. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

John Moore—Twenty semi-abstract cityscapes: people in windows, buildings shrouded in darkness, and so on. Opens April 23. Through May 21. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St.)

John Sloan (1871-1951)—Paintings dating from 1913, the year of the Armory Show, to 1918, when the artist summered in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Opens April 26. Through June 4. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

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Max Beckmann (1884-1950)—An excellent show of late paintings, sculptures, and works on paper by this renowned German Expressionist. Through May 14. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Katherine Bowling—Abstract and landscape paintings. Through May 7. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Anthony Caro—Monumental new works in steel and bronze, plus a group of smaller floor and table pieces, in a show celebrating the sculptor's seventieth birthday. Through May 27. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Saint Clair Cemin—Sculptures in a variety of mediums, by a Brazilian artist living in New York. Through May 21. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Sue Coe—Large mixed-medium drawings focussing on the artist's experiences at an AIDS ward in Galveston, Texas. Through May 27. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Zoltan Kemeny (1907-65)—Paintings from 1943 to 1953 by a Hungarian-born artist better known for his steel and iron reliefs. Through May 20. (Swiss Institute, 35 W. 67th St. Tuesdays through Sundays, 2 to 7.)

Carolyn Plochmann—Paintings and watercolors with dreamlike imagery and ornamental detail suggestive of medieval tapestries. Through May 7. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Ephraim Rubenstein—Serene landscapes and still-lifes inspired by Rainer Maria Rilke's poetry. Through May 7. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Jonathan Santlofer—Portraits of Judy Collins, Allan Gurganus, Melissa Meyer, and others. Through May 14. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

George Segal—An environmental sculpture of a woman lying on a bed, plus acrylic-on-plywood still-lifes. Through April 30. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Joseph Stella (1877-1946)—Nature-inspired drawings and paintings from throughout the artist's career, in oil, silverpoint, pastel, and watercolor. A concurrent show is on view at the Whitney Museum. Through May 27. (York, 21 E. 65th St.)

Bill Traylor (1854-1947)—A freed slave who began to draw at age eighty-five, Traylor portrayed in unadulterated fashion the people, plants, and animals he saw around him. They are rendered in often witty, silhouette-like forms, as, for example, "Man Seated Smoking" and "Figure Chasing Bird, with Construction and Cat." Through April 28. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

Ursula von Rydingsvard—A Polish artist living in New York, von Rydingsvard, whose father was a woodcutter, molds her pleasingly raw cedar sculptures by hand from sawed-up four-by-fours before disassembling them and gluing them back together—a feat accomplished, amazingly, without working drawings. The forms, more complex than their repetitive formats suggest, are evocative of hollowed-out boulders, troughs filled with roughly shaped balls (as for some primitive game), and tools. Through May 14. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

American Masterworks—Nineteenth-century works from the collection of the New-York Historical Society. Through June 18. (Equitable Center, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. Open Mondays; opens Saturdays at noon.)

"Bloomsbury"—Thirty-nine works by members of the Bloomsbury group, interesting mostly for their historical significance but lovely all the same. Quentin Bell's colorful glazed plates and tiles are especially pretty. An offhand quality gives many of the works their charm; for instance, Vanessa Bell's pencil-on-paper study for the dust jacket of "A Room of One's Own" could be taken for the work of a child. Also on view are Roger Fry's design and color schemes for Mechtilde, one of the Omega Workshop's most successful fabrics. Through April 28. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

"Counterpoints: American Art 1930-45"—A review of trends of the era, including work by Charles Shaw, Pavel Tchelitchew, and Mark Tobey. Through June 4. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

"Form, Function, and Beauty: Early Nineteenth-Century French Watercolors of Domestic Objects"—Illustrations of dinnerware, toiletry kits, sewing baskets, and the like. Through May 8. (Bard Graduate Center, 18 W. 86th St. Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30.)

"With the Passage of Time . . ."—An early and a recent work each by William Baziotes, Grace Hartigan, and Milton Resnick, among others. Through May 27. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Daniel Bruggeman—Landscape paintings constructed as objects. Opens April 26. Through May 21. (Condeso-Lawler, 524 Broadway.)

Hans Haacke—A conceptual installation. Opens April 23. Through May 21. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Margrit Lewczuk—Abstract paintings influenced by Dove and Hartley landscapes. Opens April 23. Through May 25. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

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Nicole Eisenman—Drawings, paintings, and the occasional sculpture, all rendered in a coarse, cartoonish style, by yet another "bad girl" in a season that has seen plenty of them. Eisenman brings a sense of ribald lesbian comedy to the eternally popular adolescent themes of sex and mayhem. Through May 7. (Tilton, 47-49 Greene St.)

Allen Ruppersberg—"Looking Backward. 2000-1887," an installation of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by a conceptually inclined artist. All these works address death with a portentousness that is perhaps inevitable. A discreet, moving suite of ink-and-graphite drawings, "Study for Bookmark" (1994), consists of precisely rendered images of *Times* obituaries for men who have died of AIDS. Through April 30. (Gorney Modern, 100 Greene St.)

Grimanesa Amoros—Paintings of anthropomorphic figures. Through May 30. (Roy, 46 Greene St.)

Joel Fisher—Abstract sculptures in various sizes and mediums, based on line drawings on handmade paper. Through May 27. (Markey, 55 Vandam St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 2.)

Caio Fonseca—Abstract paintings with fragmented geometries, totemic forms, and ornamental marks. Through May 7. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Mary Heilmann—Mostly geometric abstractions from the seventies. Through May 21. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

Lynn McCarty—Abstract oil paintings on Masonite, developed over an extended period. Through May 21. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

John Okulick—Wooden wall sculptures constructed in ellipses, rectangles, and cones. Through May 28. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Jack Pierson—An installation. Through May 7. (Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St.)

Doris Salcedo—An installation of clothing and furniture, alluding to the forced displacement of individuals and families. Through May 7. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Doug and Mike Starn—"Spectroheliographs"—kinetic sculptures with a film and light boxes—exploring the relationship between creationism and scientific explanations of existence. Through May 7. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Philip Taaffe—Heavily patterned abstractions. Through May 14. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

Thomas Trosch—Paintings depicting women in high-class social settings, with humorous remarks in cartoon speech balloons. Through May 4. (Freire, 130 Prince St.)

Matthew Weinstein—Abstract paintings with suggestions of the human body. Through May 14. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

"Drawing Towards a Distant Shore: Selections from Portugal"—Six artists spanning two generations. Through May 21. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St.)

"Fractured Identity: Cut and Paste"—A show devoted to collage in the twentieth century, featuring works by Romare Bearden, Elaine Cohen, and others. Through May 21. (Saul, 560 Broadway.)

ANTIQUES AND AUCTIONS

Focus on Photos—A week of photography auctions kicks off with a two-day sale at Christie's, on April 20 at 6 and April 21 at 10 and 2. Among the important lots on the first day is Edward Weston's 1926 "Cloud, Mexico" (estimate: $80,000-$100,000), which was originally in the personal collection of the photographer's son, Cole Weston. It is the first photograph to be offered at auction by the J. Paul Getty Museum. The second day will feature work by both Alfred Stieglitz, including a 1916 portrait of Marsden Hartley (estimate: $40,000-$60,000), and Man Ray, notably his 1926 portrait of Kiki of Montparnasse (estimate: $150,000-$180,000). (Park Ave. at 59th St. For further information, call 546-1119.)

MOMA and More—On April 23 at 2, Sotheby's presents a sale that includes fifty-seven lots of twentieth-century photographs from the Museum of Modern Art, many acquired directly from the photographers. Estimates range from $6,000-$8,000 for Eugène Atget's "Saint-Cloud" (1924) to $40,000-$50,000 for Diane Arbus's "Identical Twins, N.J." (1967). The MOMA lots are part of a general sale of photographs from various owners, beginning at 10:15. (York Ave. at 72nd St. For further information, call 606-7176.)

In Books—Swann Galleries chimes in with a two-session auction of contemporary and historical photographs and books illustrated with photographs, on April 22 at 10 and 2. A tintype portrait of Billy the Kid (circa 1878) as a fresh-faced eighteen-year-old has never before been up for auction (estimate: $25,000-$35,000). Another first is an album of albumen photographs titled "The Pacific Coast of Central America and Mexico, 1875-1877," by Eadweard Muybridge (estimate: $70,000-$80,000). (104 E. 25th St. For further information, call 254-4710.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dieter Appelt—The first solo exhibition in New York by this German photographer and sculptor. Through April 30. (Sander, 19 E. 76th St.)

Ellen Auerbach—Photographs of Mexican churches, taken in the fifties, by this Bauhaus-educated photographer. Through May 7. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St.)

Lynn Davis—Photographs of religious and architectural artifacts in Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand. Through May 21. (Danziger, 130 Prince St.)

Jed Devine—Sixty-four luminous images of Maine. Through April 30. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

Arthur Elgort—A behind-the-scenes look at the world of professional waifs and other lanky goddesses. Through April 30. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway.)

Barbara Ess—Large black-and-white and color images. Through April 23. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Dorothea Lange (1895-1965)—Forty-three extraordinary images taken between 1933 and 1963, many of which were produced under the auspices of the Farm Security Administration. Through May 7. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

James Van Der Zee (1886-1983)—A retrospective of both his late work and his photographs of Harlem in the twenties and thirties. Through April 30. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

"Pioneers of Soviet Photography"—Works, from 1918 through 1935, by Alexander Rodchenko, Max Alpert, and others. Through April 30. (Schickler, 52 E. 76th St.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Cocaine True, Cocaine Blue." Through May 8. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"American Ground Zero: The Secret Nuclear War." Photographs by Carole Gallagher that document the victims of radioactive fallout in the Western United States. . . . ¶ Photographs of northern New Mexico by Alex Harris. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum, the China Institute, and the Museum of the City of New York.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Veteran Rookie

Carnegie Hall's redoubtable "Virtuoso Keyboard Series" would hardly seem the forum for a début recital. Nevertheless, when Ursula Oppens appears on this season's series, on April 20, she'll be playing her first recital in that high temple of music.

Oppens certainly deserves a place of honor on the series' roster: few pianists have won such consistent high marks in the course of their careers (and her career has been going strong for a good three decades). But she's not thought of as a Carnegie Hall kind of pianist. She got pegged early on as a contemporary-music specialist, and because she nurtured new works with more skill and devotion than almost anyone else, people began to think that's all she wanted to do. Indeed, she has introduced difficult works by Pierre Boulez, György Ligeti, Donald Martino, Elliot Carter, Conlon Nancarrow, Tobias Picker, Charles Wuorinen, Joan Tower, Frederic Rzewski—the list goes on and on—so persuasively that many have become repertoire classics of sorts. But the truth is that she also plays the music of earlier

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times, veering toward pieces that pose technical challenges and interpretative conundrums. Doubters are referred to her magisterial reading of Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata, on the Music and Arts label.

Oppens' Carnegie Hall recital will encompass both the old and the new: old music in the form of Beethoven's last sonata and little-played G-Minor Fantasia, as well as two large-scale works by Ravel; and new music through John Harbison's captivating, contrapuntal Piano Sonata, written not quite a decade ago.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Final performances of the season. **aida,** with Sharon Sweet, Ghena Dimitrova, Lando Bartolini, and Leo Nucci; conducted by Samuel Cristler. (April 20 at 8 and April 23 at 7:30.) . . . **ariadne auf naxos,** with Deborah Voigt, Tracy Dahl, Teresa Stratas, Wolfgang Schmidt, and Hermann Prey; James Levine. (April 21 at 8 and April 23 at 1:30.) . . . **otello,** with Carol Vaness, Vladimir Atlantov, and Sergei Leiferkus; Adam Fischer. (April 22 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

"The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin"—Final performances of a new opera by Peter Gordon, to a libretto by Constance Congdon, based on a novel by P. D. Ouspensky. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. April 20-24 at 7:30.)

Juilliard Opera Center—Presenting Monteverdi's "L'Incoronazione di Poppea," fully staged, with Gary Wedow conducting. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 769-7406. April 20 and April 22 at 8 and April 24 at 2.)

Manhattan School of Music Opera Theatre—Presenting Britten's "The Turn of the Screw," fully staged, with Julius Rudel on the podium. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 428. April 20 and April 22 at 8 and April 24 at 2:30.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting Verdi's "Falstaff," in a macaronic Italian-and-English production. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. April 23 at 7:30 and April 24 at 2:30.)

New York Vocal Artists—Performing Copland's "The Tender Land," in concert. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. April 24 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. April 21-23 at 8 and April 26 at 7:30: Haydn's Symphony No. 71 and Copland's Symphony No. 3, as well as Debussy's "Trois Ballades de Villon" and Ravel's "Don Quichotte à Dulcinée" (both featuring baritone Thomas Hampson). . . . ¶ April 23 at 2: Ravel's "Don Quichotte à Dulcinée" (with Mr. Hampson) and Rachmaninoff's "Symphonic Dances."

New York Concert Singers—Judith Clurman directs works by Mozart, Brahms (his "Liebeslieder Waltzes," Op. 52), Schoenberg, and Schubert; with organist Keith S. Toth and fortepianists Malcolm Bilson and Blaise Bryski. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 20 at 8.)

New York Pops—Skitch Henderson directs a jazz program that features guitarist John Pizzarelli and the Diva big band. (Carnegie Hall. April 22 at 8.)

Detroit Symphony Orchestra—Neeme Järvi conducts Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 1, Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2 (with Shura Cherkassky), and Ellington's "Harlem." (Carnegie Hall. April 23 at 8.)

Philharmonia Virtuosi and the Taghkanic Chorale—Richard Kapp directs Haydn's "The Creation." (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 23 at 7.)

Cosmopolitan Symphony Orchestra—Richard Westerfield conducts Sibelius's C-Major Romance, Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 (with Bion Tsang), and Schubert's Symphony No. 9. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 24 at 2. . . . **note:** Violinist Eric Grossman and pianist Ilan Rechtman will perform a pre-concert recital beginning at 1 and open to ticket holders.)

Bournemouth Symphony—Andrew Litton conducts the orchestra, which is celebrating its centennial this season, in Bernstein's "Candide" Overture, Sibelius's Violin Concerto (featuring Cho-Liang Lin), and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 24 at 3.)

Riverside Choir—Stephen Kushner directs Brahms' "Ein Deutsches Requiem," with soprano Diana Solomon-Glover and baritone Christòpheren Nomura. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. April 24 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

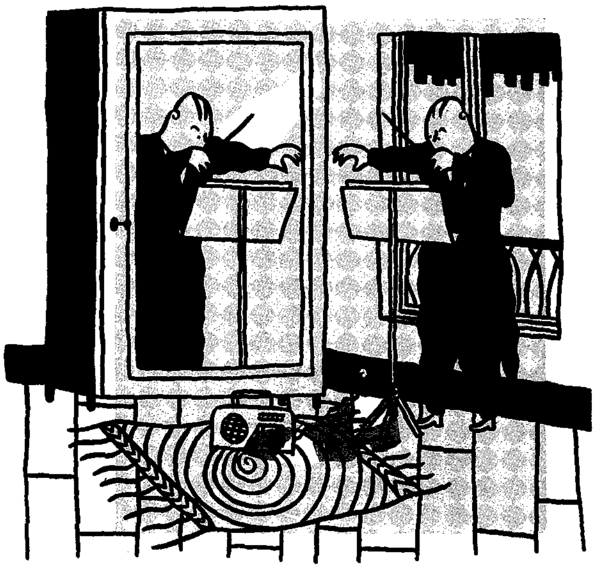
New Amsterdam Singers Chamber Choir—Clara Longstreth directs works by Brahms, Bruch, Britten, and Matthew Harris, in a program that includes an appearance by the close-harmony group Uptown Local. (Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 164 W. 100th St. April 24 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

New American Chamber Orchestra—Beth Cohen conducts a Mozart divertimento, Vivaldi's Four-Violin Concerto in B Minor, Britten's "Simple Symphony," Dvořák's Serenade for Strings, and Copland's "Hoe Down" (from "Rodeo"). (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. April 24 at 3.)

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra—Jesús López-Cobos conducts Brahms' "Tragic Overture" and Violin Concerto (with Pinchas Zukerman) and Dvořák's Symphony No. 7. (Carnegie Hall. April 25 at 8.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts Hindemith's "Nobilissima Visione," Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with András Schiff), and Dvořák's "Slavonic Dances" (Op. 46). (Carnegie Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Bach Bash—An all-Bach program that comprises the Cantatas No. 51 and No. 202 (with soprano Tamara Crout), the E-Major Harpsichord Concerto (with Edward Brewer), and the A-Major Oboe d'Amore Concerto (with Virginia Brewer). A period-instrument ensemble assists. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. April 26 at 8.)


LAURENT CILUFFO

New York Debut and Premiere Orchestra—Eric Wade Reiff conducts premières of works by Israeli composers Ben-Zion Orgad, Sergiu Shapira (his "Remembrance," featuring cellist Benjamin Shapira), and Noam Sheriff (his "Metamorphoses on a Galliard," with pianist Max Barros). Rounding out the program are Lukas Foss's "Elegy for Anne Frank" (with Mr. Barros) and Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 4 (with Ron Hilbuch). (Alice Tully Hall. April 26 at 8.)

RECITALS

Ursula Oppens—The pianist performs Beethoven's G-Minor Fantasia (Op. 77) and C-Minor Sonata (Op. 111), Ravel's "La Valse" and "Valses Nobles et Sentimentales," and the New York première of John Harbison's Piano Sonata. (Carnegie Hall. April 20 at 8.)

Rosa Torres-Pardo—Pianist, performing Schubert's Three Pieces (D. 946), Granados's "El Amor y la Muerte," Mompou's "Cantos Mágicos," and Stravinsky's "Three Movements from Petrouchka." (Alice Tully Hall. April 20 at 8.)

Winterreise Redux—Singer Marianne Schuppe and pianist Christoph Schiller offer a freely adapted, improvisational interpretation of Schubert's "Die Winterreise." (Roulette, 228 West Broadway. April 20 at 9. For information about tickets, call 564-7035.)

Bargemusic—Albert Kim performs Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E-Flat Major (Op. 31, No. 3); violinist Ida Levin and cellist Fred Sherry join him for trios by Beethoven (in C Minor) and Brahms (in C Major). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 21 at 7:30 and April 24 at 4.)

Dana Hanchard—The soprano (assisted by pianist Steven Blier) concludes Merkin Concert Hall's season-long survey of French art song by performing works written between the World Wars, including mélodies (by Roussel, Satie, Milhaud, and Poulenc) and repertoire of the café concert associated with such performers as Yvette Guilbert, Mistinguett, and Josephine Baker. (April 21 at 8. . . . **note:** In a pre-concert reading, beginning at 7:15 and open to ticket holders, Karen Evans Kandel will present memoirs, poems, and other literary items of the period, by Jean Cocteau, Paul Éluard, André Breton, Colette, and others.)

Young Uck Kim and Emanuel Ax—The violinist and the pianist perform sonatas by Beethoven (in A Minor, Op. 23) and Franck, as well as Ravel's "Pièce en Forme de Habanera" and the New York première of Tobias Picker's "Invisible Lilacs." (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 22 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—The musical family of Claude Frank and Lilian Kallir (husband-and-wife pianists) and their violinist daughter Pamela Frank are among the Society's guests in a program that comprises Beethoven's F-Major Violin Sonata (the "Spring"), Saint-Saëns' "Carnival of the Animals" (with Peter Schickele narrating), and Schumann's Piano Quintet. (Alice Tully Hall. April 22 at 8 and April 24 at 5.)

New York French Baroque Ensemble—Performing chamber works by Vivaldi and Zelenka, on period instruments. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. April 24 at 11 A.M. Admission is free, but call 1-718 885-2478 to reserve a seat.)

Sherrill Milnes—The baritone performs works by Schubert, Ravel, Barber, and others; with pianist Jon Spong. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 24 at 3.)

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CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

Schubertiade—The festival continues with a program comprising Schubert songs (with baritone Hermann Prey and pianist Jeffrey Swann), piano works (with Mr. Swann), and the C-Major String Quintet. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 24 at 3. The concert will be preceded at 2 by a lecture, open to ticket holders. The final Schubertiade event takes place on April 28.)

Janice Martin—Violinist, performing sonatas by Mozart and Debussy, with pianist Ilan Rechtman. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. April 24 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

Cage Events—A pair of performances this week relate to the Guggenheim Museum SoHo's John Cage exhibit. April 24 at 6: The S.E.M. Ensemble and the Midwood High School Orchestra perform Cage's "Atlas Eclipticalis" and "Concert for Piano and Orchestra" (featuring Joseph Kubera). (Willow Place Auditorium, 26 Willow Pl., Brooklyn. For information about tickets, call 1-718 488-7659.) . . . ¶ April 24 at 9: "Imusicircus," a realization of Cage's "Circus On," employing music, performance, film, and video. (Experimental Intermedia Foundation, 224 Centre St. For information about tickets, call 431-1130.)

Eliot Fisk—Classical guitarist, playing works by Turina, Scarlatti, Bach, Rochberg, and Rodrigo. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. April 25 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Cecilia Bartoli—The mezzo-soprano sings songs by Mozart, Bellini, Rossini, Ravel, and de Falla; with pianist Steven Blier. (Alice Tully Hall. April 25 at 8.)

The King's Noyse—Violinist David Douglass leads the period-instrument ensemble in songs and instrumental works by Orazio Vecchi, Cipriano de Rore, and Monteverdi. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Laurel Ann Maurer—Flutist, performing premières of works by Meyer Kupferman and Augusta Read Thomas, as well as pieces by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Joan Tower, and Copland; with pianist Joanne Pearce and classical guitarist Jerry Willard assisting. (Weill Recital Hall. April 26 at 8.)

New Juilliard Ensemble—Performing music by David del Tredici (his "Haddocks' Eyes"), Gilberto Mendes, Valentin Bibik, Klaus Ager, Carman Moore, and Manuel Sosa. (Paul Hall, Juilliard School, 165 W. 65th St. April 26 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Schubert Plus—Schubert's String Trio in B-Flat Major and "Trout" Quintet, as well as the song on which the latter's variations are based (featuring tenor Paul Groves, who will also sing the New York première of a cycle of Ned Rorem's settings of poems by Auden); with violinist Jaime Laredo, violist Michael Tree, cellist Sharon Robinson, double bassist Julius Levine, and pianist Joseph Kalichstein. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 26-27 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Bibliophilia—So you don't know one Shakespeare folio from the next, but you're looking for a volume to slide in next to your first edition of Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451"? In addition to science fiction and the Bard, the New York Antiquarian Book Fair will feature mysteries, historical letters, maps, and autographs. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. April 22, from 11 to 9; April 23, from 11 to 7; and April 24, from 11 to 5. Tickets at the door on the days of the event.)

After Dark—In honor of Earth Day, take a Central Park walk at twilight, April 22 at 6, and find out which trees you're allowed to hug. Flashlights are recommended. (To register, call 860-1370.)

Subway Series—Two festivals of graduate-student films, from universities at opposite ends of Manhattan. New York University's First-Run Film Festival will feature the work of novice filmmakers, as well as the student work of some of its most notable alumni—Spike Lee and Oliver Stone, among others. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 24-28, from 1 to 5 and from 6 to 11.) . . . ¶ Farther north, Columbia University will screen its students' best. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. April 23 at 7.)

It's a Wrap—Christo and his wife and collaborator of thirty-six years, Jeanne-Claude, will talk about their upcoming project to wrap the Berlin Reichstag. For two weeks before reconstruction is scheduled to begin, in 1995, the former German parliament building will be enveloped in several thousand square feet of silvery cloth. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. April 25 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

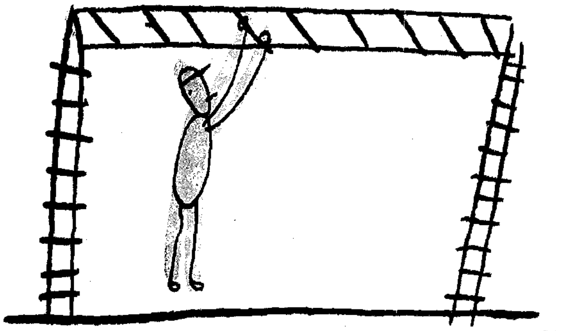
So Long, Wobegon—Garrison Keillor's final Town Hall broadcast of "A Prairie Home Companion," on April 23, beginning at 5:45, will include the Hopeful Gospel Quartet (of which Keillor is a member), Peter Rowan and the Rowan Brothers, and the Broadway Local Theatre Company. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

Other People's Words—April 20 at 6:30: Readings from "Russell Baker's Book of American Humor" will include James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and Zora Neale Hurston's "Talking Mule Story." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ April 25 at 8: Actors Irene Worth and Peter Stormare will read poetry, prose, and drama from the German Romantic period, including works by Goethe and Schiller. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Readings—April 20 at 8: John Ashbery and Gerrit Henry will read from their own poetry. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 22 at 8: Darryl Pinckney will read from his own fiction. (Universalist Church, 160 Central Park W., at 76th St. For information about tickets, call 875-4128.) . . . ¶ April 25 at 8: Randall Kenan will read from his new biography of James Baldwin. (A Different Light, 548 Hudson St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 26 at 7:30: Alice Fulton and Richard Howard will read from their own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 26 at 8: To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the *Quarterly Review of Literature*, its editors, Theodore and Renée Weiss, and Robert Coover, among others, will read from work published in the magazine. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Talks—April 20 at 6: Professor of neurology and author Oliver Sacks will give a talk titled "Recycling Old Ideas, New Forms." (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.) . . . ¶ April 25 at 6: Architectural historian and critic Witold Rybczynski will lead a panel discussion about changing styles in architecture. (American Institute of Architects, 200 Lexington Ave., at 33rd St., 13th floor. 683-0023.) . . . ¶ April 26 at 6: Stephen Jay Gould, who has authored numerous essays about natural history, will talk about his writing. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.) . . . ¶ April 26 at 7:30: Judy Chicago will discuss and screen a video about her latest art show, "The Holocaust Project." (Congregation Beth Elohim, Garfield Temple, Eighth Ave. and Garfield Pl., Brooklyn. For information about tickets, call 1-718 768-3814.)

Walks & Tours—April 24 at 1: The "Invitation to Brooklyn" House Tours 1994 will kick off with a look—inside and out—at Victorian houses in Flatbush. For more information, call 1-718 802-3832. . . . ¶ April 23 at 1: Big Onion Walking Tours will guide visitors around historic Harlem. For more information, call 439-1090.



SPORTS

(The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; the Yankees at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000; and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Philadelphia 76ers, April 21 at 7:30.

Nets—Vs. the Milwaukee Bucks, April 23 at 7:30.

Yankees—Vs. the Seattle Mariners, April 20 at 7:05 and April 21 at 1:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Oakland Athletics, April 22 at 7:05 and April 23-24 at 1:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the California Angels, April 25 at 7:05 and April 26 at 1:05.

Mets—Vs. the San Diego Padres, April 26 at 7:40.

CHAMPIONSHIP HOCKEY

Eastern Conference Playoffs—The Rangers, the Devils, and the Islanders have all secured playoff berths. The Rangers, who are seeded No. 1, will face the Islanders on April 21 and April 23 or April 24, at Nassau Coliseum, and April 25 (if necessary), at Madison Square Garden. The Devils will face the Montreal Canadiens or the Buffalo Sabres.

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

Here Comes the Sun—In an Earth Day-related program at the Transit Museum, participants will learn about solar-powered machines and will work on a sun-run model car. Recommended ages: eight to twelve. (New York Transit Museum, Schermerhorn St. at Boerum Pl., Brooklyn Heights. 1-718 330-3060. April 23, from 1:30 to 3:30.)

Little People's Theatre Company—Take your choice: "Humpty Dumpty" (at 1:30) or "Little Red Ridinghood" (at 3), on Saturdays and Sundays. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 765-9540.)

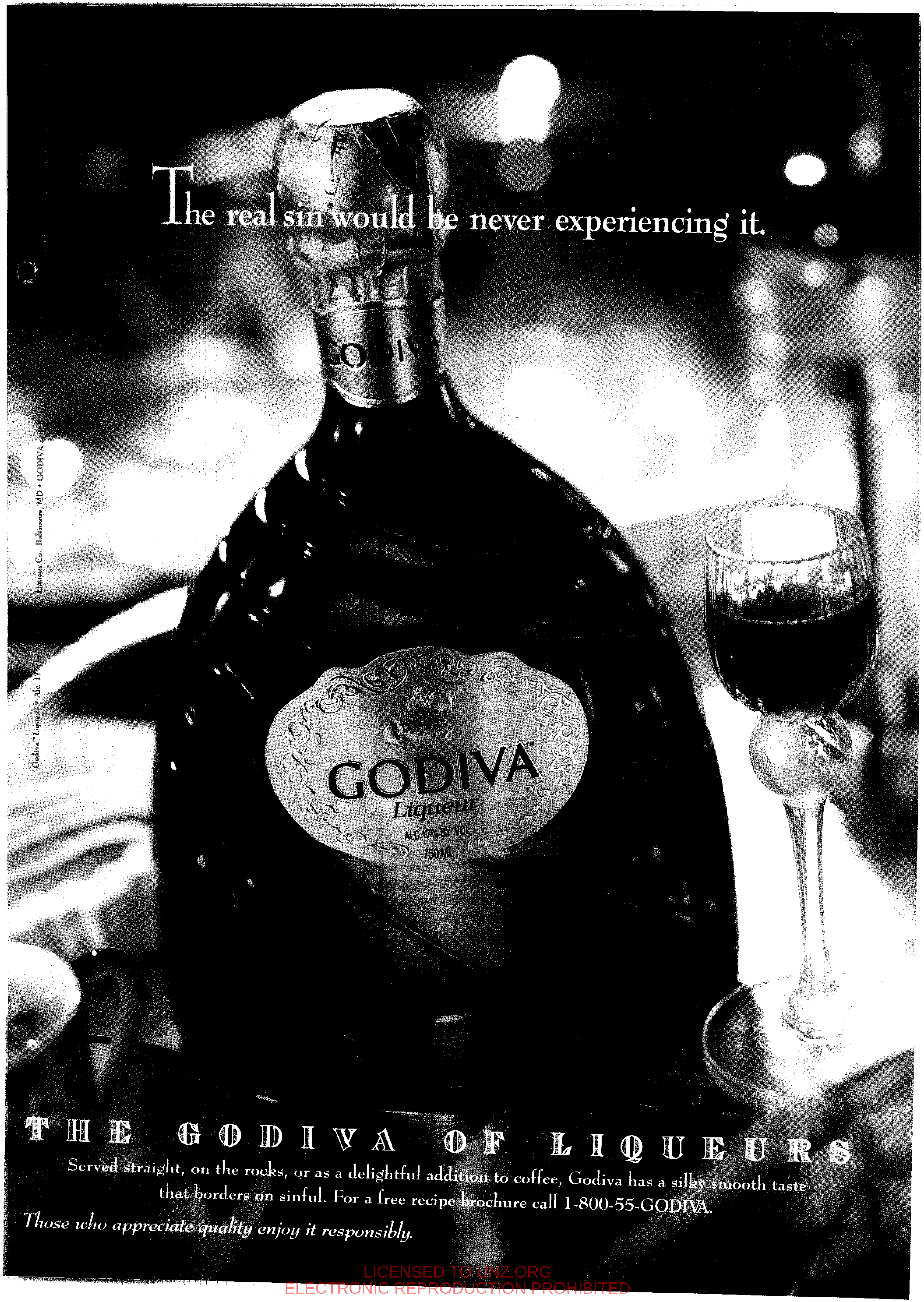
Musically Inclined—New York Chamber Soloists in a "Children's Choice" afternoon of works by Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, and Jon Deak (the première of "Fairy Tale with Music"). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 23 at 2:30.)

"In the Great Green Room"—Dance, music, and storytelling, by Beverly Blossom, Ann Carlson, Cooper-Moore, and Felix Pitre. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. April 23 at 2:30. For information about tickets, call 741-2800.)

"The True Story of Rumpelstiltskin"—A marionette production of the German folktale. (Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Tuesdays through Fridays at 10:30 and noon, and Saturdays at noon and 3. For reservations, which are required, call 988-9093.)

Keep in Mind—The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus at Madison Square Garden. (465-6000. Through April 30.) . . . ¶ "Sharks! Fact and Fantasy" at the American Museum of Natural History, through May 1. . . . ¶ "Beauty and the Beast" (the musical) at the Palace Theatre (307-4100).

SANTIAGO COHEN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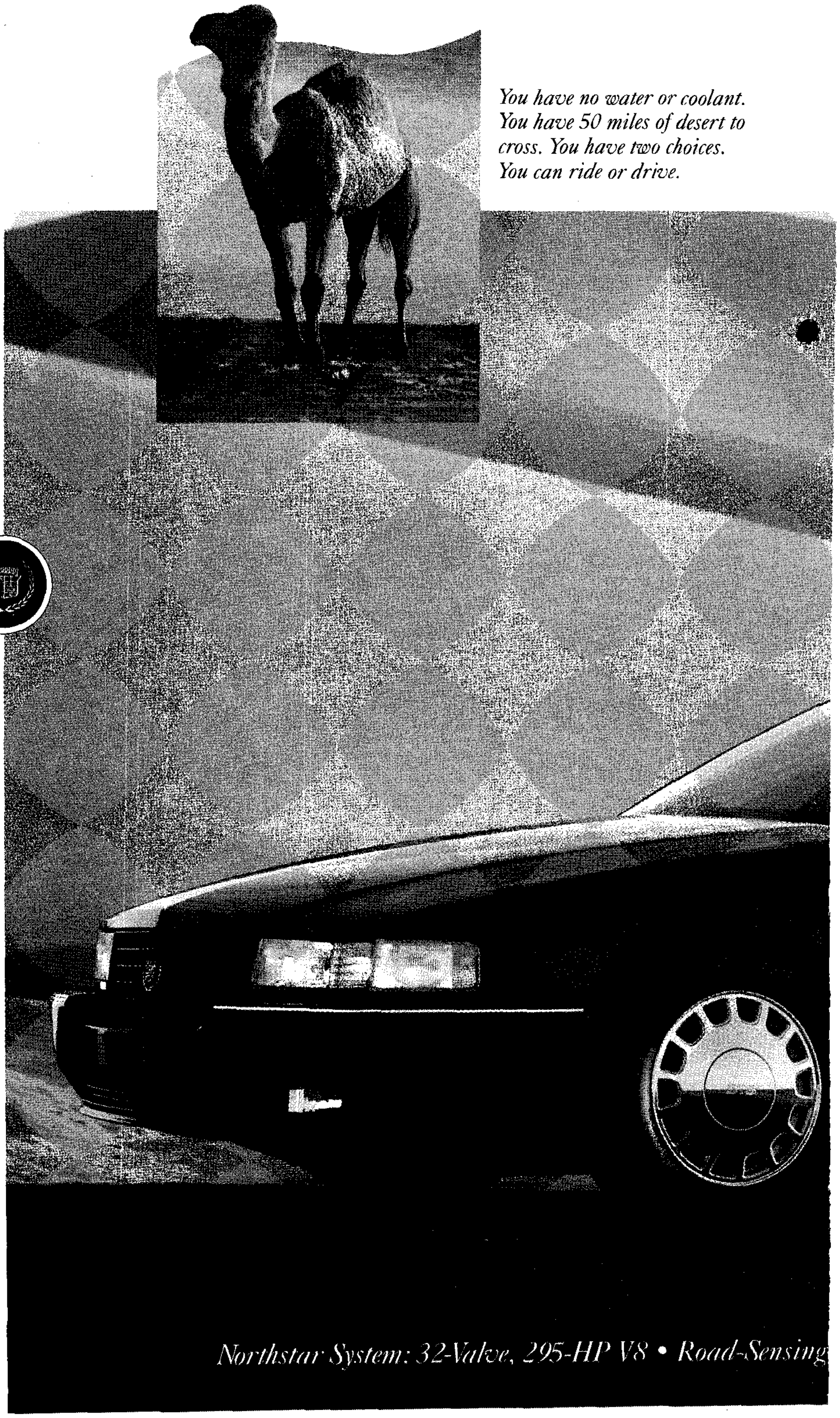
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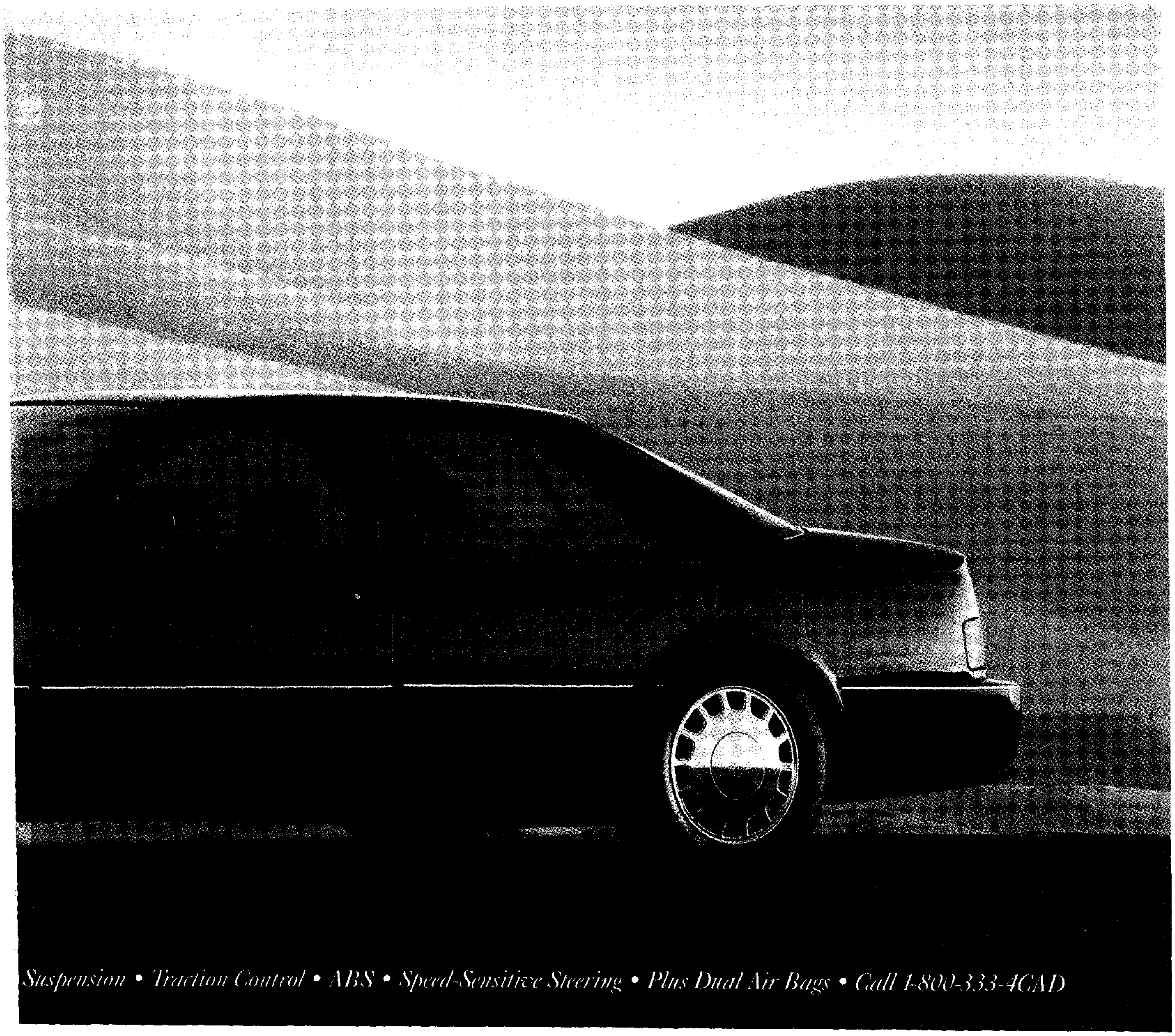
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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Backbeat" (†).
Theatre 2: "Suture" (directed by Scott McGehee and David Siegal).
Theatre 3: "Cronos" (Guillermo del Toro, in English and Spanish).
Theatre 4: "Savage Nights" (Cyril Collard, in French), with Collard.
Theatre 5: "Sirens" (John Duigan).
Theatre 6: "The House of the Spirits" (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"I Only Want You to Love Me" (1976, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German).

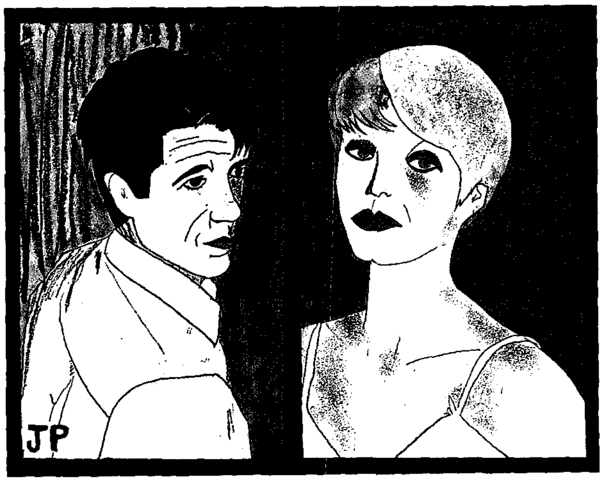
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 2: "Philadelphia" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 21: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender), with Warwick Davis. From April 22: "Bad Girls" (Jonathan Kaplan).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming), with Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles.
Theatre 2: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).
Theatre 3: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).
Theatre 4: "Naked in New York" (Dan Algrant), with Eric Stoltz.
Theatre 5: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).
Theatre 6: "Jimmy Hollywood" (Barry Levinson), with Joe Pesci and Christian Slater.
Theatre 7: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Red Rock West" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Belle Époque" (†).
Theatre 2: "Serial Mom" (John Waters), with Kathleen Turner.
Theatre 3: "In Custody" (Ismail Merchant, in Urdu), with Shashi Kapoor and Om Puri.
Theatre 4: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).
Theatre 5: Through April 21: "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" (Lasse Hallström). From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).
Theatre 6: Through April 21: "White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin). From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 7: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty) and "The Snapper" (Stephen Frears).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Serial Mom" (John Waters).
Theatre 2: "Philadelphia" (†).
Theatre 3: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).
Theatre 4: Through April 21: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†). From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).
Theatre 5: "Backbeat" (†).
Theatre 6: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).



At the Quad Cinema, Fred Ward and Suzy Amis in "Two Small Bodies."

THE MOVIES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			20	21	22	23
24	25	26				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 33.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sirens" (John Duigan), with Hugh Grant, Tara Fitzgerald, and Sam Neill.
Theatre 3: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 4: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Guarding Tess" (Hugh Wilson).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through April 21: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†). From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).
Theatre 2: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 3: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Schindler's List" (†).

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Belle Époque" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).
Theatre 2: "Serial Mom" (John Waters).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through April 21: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (Chris Columbus), with Robin Williams.
From April 22: "Bad Girls" (Jonathan Kaplan).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"In Custody" (Ismail Merchant, in Urdu), with Shashi Kapoor and Om Puri.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Guarding Tess" (Hugh Wilson), with Nicolas Cage and Shirley MacLaine.
Theatre 2: Through April 21: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty), with Martin Short and Charles Grodin; and "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender), with Warwick Davis. From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Six Degrees of Separation" (Fred Schepisi).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "The House of the Spirits" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 21: "White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin). From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 3: "Bitter Moon" (†).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 3: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 4: "Reality Bites" (†).
Theatre 5: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Piano" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Major League II" (David S. Ward).
Theatre 2: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming), with Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Naked in New York" (Dan Algrant).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Sirens" (John Duigan), with Hugh Grant, Tara Fitzgerald, and Sam Neill.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Backbeat" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "The Paper" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 21: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack). From April 22: "Bad Girls" (Jonathan Kaplan).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 2: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming), with Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles.
Theatre 3: "White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin).
Theatre 4: "The House of the Spirits" (†).
Theatre 5: "Serial Mom" (John Waters).
Theatre 6: Through April 21: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty). From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).
Theatre 7: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth), an animated film.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through April 21: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman). From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 2: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Sunday's Children" (†).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl" (†); and "Zero Patience" (directed by John Greyson).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Reality Bites" (†).
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Two Small Bodies" (Beth B).
Theatre 2: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 3: "Bitter Moon" (†).
Theatre 4: "Farewell My Concubine" (Chen Kaige, in Mandarin).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 21: "The Paper" (†). *From April 22:* "Bad Girls" (Jonathan Kaplan).
Theatre 4: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).
Theatre 6: Through April 21: "Schindler's List" (†). From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 7: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.

JP FORREST

Theatre 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 9: "The House of the Spirits" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin).
Theatre 2: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth); and "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 3: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).
Theatre 2: "Short Cuts" (Robert Altman).
Theatre 3: "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg).
Theatre 4: "Greedy" (Jonathan Lynn).
Theatre 5: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos).
Theatre 6: "China Moon" (John Bailey).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Paper" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sirens" (John Duigan), with Hugh Grant, Tara Fitzgerald, and Sam Neill.

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "The House of the Spirits" (†).
Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"Cronos" (Guillermo del Toro, in English and Spanish).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Germinal" (Claude Berri, in French).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Fiorile" (Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, in Italian).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Reality Bites" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "A Tale of Winter" (†).
Theatre 2: "Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould" (†).
Theatre 3: "Ivan and Abraham" (Yolande Zauberman, in Yiddish).
Theatre 4: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Blue Kite" (Tian Zhuangzhuang, in Mandarin).
Theatre 6: "Belle Époque" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Schindler's List" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through April 21: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†). From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).
Theatre 2: Through April 21: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson). From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 3: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 4: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).
Theatre 5: "Serial Mom" (John Waters), with Kathleen Turner.
Theatre 6: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming), with Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (316-4962)
"Bitter Moon" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "White Fang 2: Myth of the White Wolf" (Ken Olin).
Theatre 2: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman), with Emilio Estevez.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 2: "Monkey Trouble" (Franco Amurri) and "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Serial Mom" (directed by John Waters), with Kathleen Turner.
Theatre 2: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 3: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming), with Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles.
Theatre 4: "Cops and Robbersons" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase and Jack Palance.
Theatre 5: Through April 21: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Major League II" (David S. Ward). From April 22: "Chasers" (Dennis Hopper).
Theatre 6: "Philadelphia" (†); and "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).
Theatre 7: "Surviving the Game."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through April 21: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman), with Emilio Estevez.
From April 22: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty).
Theatre 2: "The Ref" (Ted Demme).
Theatre 3: Through April 21: "Blank Check" (Rupert Wainwright) and "Angie" (Martha Coolidge). From April 22: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman).

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through April 21: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).
From April 22: "Brainscan" (John Flynn).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through April 21: "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender). From April 22: "Bad Girls" (Jonathan Kaplan).
Theatre 2: "Sugar Hill" (Leon Ichaso).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
April 20: "Exit Smiling" (1926, directed by Sam Taylor; silent), with Beatrice Lillie; and "Pretty Ladies" (1925, Monta Bell; silent), with ZaSu Pitts.
April 21: "The Unholy Three" (1925, Tod Browning; silent), with Lon Chaney, Victor McLaglen, and Mae Busch; and "West of Zanzibar" (1928, Browning; silent), with Lon Chaney and Lionel Barrymore.

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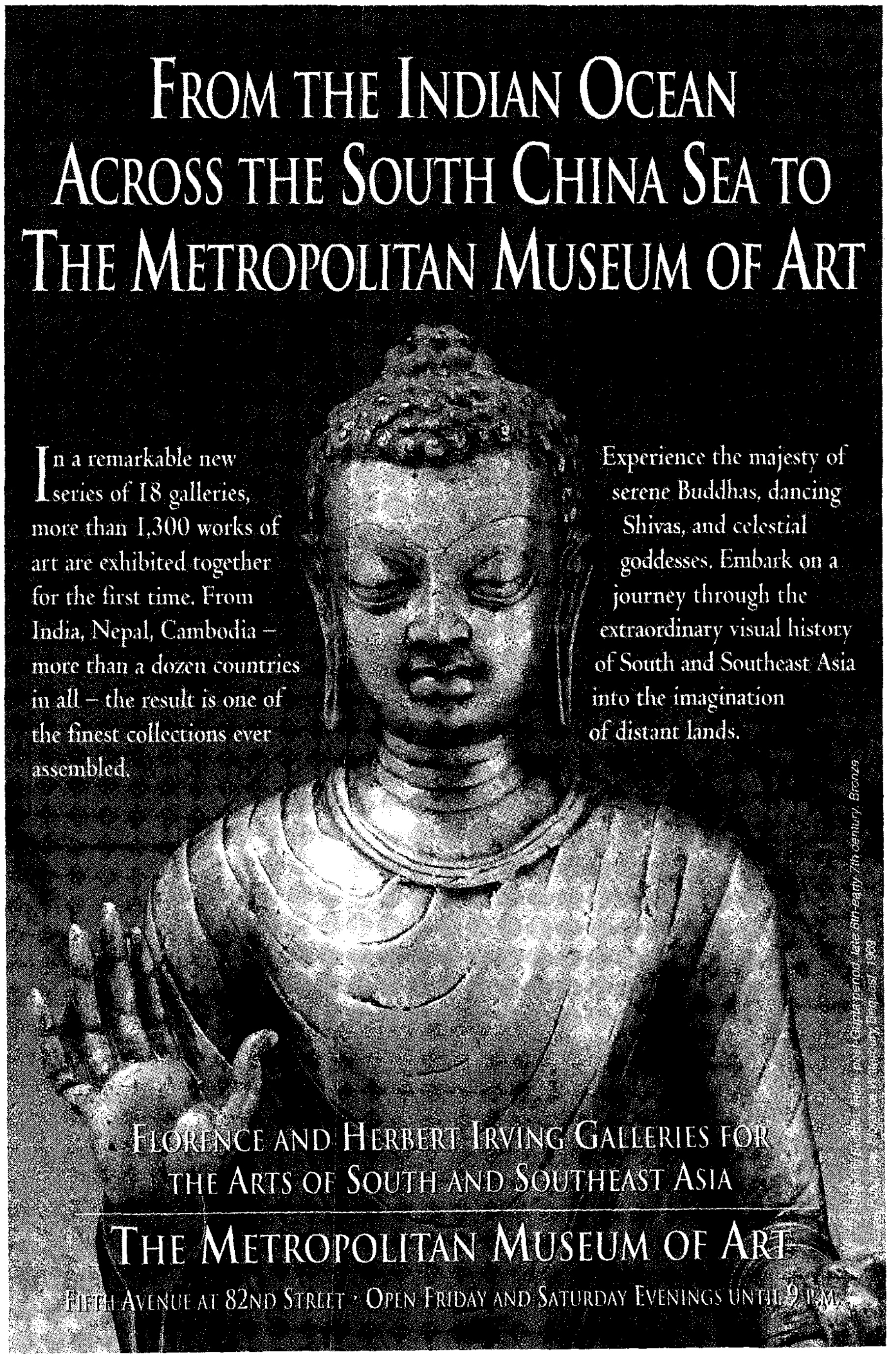
MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

April 22-23: "The Cameraman" (1928, Edward Sedgwick; silent), with Buster Keaton; and "Show People" (1928, King Vidor), with Marion Davies.
April 24: "The Crowd" (1928, King Vidor), with Eleanor Boardman and James Murray; and "White Shadows in the South Seas" (1928, W. S. Van Dyke; silent).
April 25: "Ben-Hur" (†).
April 26: "Man, Woman and Sin" (1927, Monta Bell; silent), with Jeanne Eagels and John Gilbert; and "Upstage" (1926, Bell; silent), with Norma Shearer.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
April 20: "Bonnie and Clyde" (1967, Arthur Penn), with Warren Beatty, Faye Dunaway, Gene Hackman, and Estelle Parsons; and "Badlands" (1973, Terrence Malick), with Martin Sheen, Sissy Spacek, and Warren Oates.
April 21: "Ride the High Country" (†); and "Junior Bonner" (1972, Sam Peckinpah), with Steve McQueen, Robert Preston, and Ida Lupino.
April 22-23: "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis; and "The Mirror Crack'd" (1980, Guy Hamilton), with Angela Lansbury, Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, Edward Fox, Kim Novak, Tony Curtis, and Geraldine Chaplin.
April 24: "Les Enfants Terribles" ("The Strange Ones"; 1949, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Nicole Stéphane, Edouard Dermithe, Renée Cosima, and Jacques Bernard; and "The Eternal Return" (1943, Jean Delannoy; in French), with Jean Marais, Madeleine Sologne, Yvonne de Bray, and Piéral.
April 25: "Stray Dog" (1949, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and "Ikiru" (1952, Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Takashi Shimura.
April 26: "The Blue Dahlia" (1946, George Marshall), with Alan Ladd, Veronica Lake, William Bendix, and Howard Da Silva; and "The Great Gatsby" (1949, Elliott Nugent), with Ladd, Betty Field, Macdonald Carey, and Barry Sullivan.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FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films directed by John Ford. April 21 at 2:30 and April 25 at 6: "The Iron Horse" (1924). . . . April 21 at 6: "The Shamrock Handicap" (1926). . . . April 21 at 8 and April 24 at 5: "How Green Was My Valley" (1941). . . . April 22 at 2:30 and April 26 at 6: "Straight Shooting" (1917). . . . April 22 at 6: "Up the River" (†). . . . April 22 at 8 and April 24 at 2: "The Searchers" (1956). . . . April 23 at 2: "Seas Beneath" (1931). . . . April 23 at 5: "Stagecoach" (1939). . . . April 25 at 2:30: "Just Pals" (1920). . . . April 26 at 2:30: "Three Bad Men" (1926). . . . ¶ April 21 at 3 and 6: "I'm You, You're Me" (1993, Catherine Saalfield and Debra Levine) and "Zone" (1992, Revaz Gvarliani). . . . ¶ April 22 at 3 and April 24 at 5: "From the Terrace" (1960, Mark Robson). . . . ¶ April 22 at 6:30 and April 23 at 3: "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946, William Wyler). . . . ¶ April 23 at 1: Two films by Paul Sharits. . . . ¶ April 24 at 2:30: "Topaze" (1933, Harry d'Abbadie d'Arrast). . . . ¶ April 25 at 3: "The Third Man" (1950, Carol Reed). . . . ¶ April 25 at 6:30: A program of films by Michael Maziere. . . . ¶ April 26 at 7: "Fallingwater: A Conversation with Edgar Kaufmann" (1994, Kenneth Love), a documentary.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A program of films from Africa. April 20 at 2 and 6:30: "Monday's Girls" (1993, Ngozi Onwurah) and "Fire Eyes" (1993, Soraya Mire). . . . April 20 at 4: "Wend Kuuni" (1982, Gaston Kaboré). . . . April 20 at 9, April 21 at 2, April 22 at 10, and April 23 at 2: "Jom, the Story of a People" (1981, Ababacar Samb-Makharam). . . . April 21 at 4 and April 22 at 2 and 6: "Life Is Rosy" (1987, Ngangura Mweze and Benoit Lamy). . . . April 21 at 6:30 and April 22 at 4 and 8: "Fire!" (1991, Adama Drabo). . . . April 23 at 4 and April 24 at 6:15: "White Ebony" (1991, Cheik Doukouré). . . . April 23 at 6:45 and April 24 at 4 and 8:45: "The Golden Ball" (1992, Doukouré). . . . April 23 at 9 and April 24 at 2: "Rue Princess" (1993, Henri Duparc). . . . ¶ April 21 at 8:30: "Hand Gun" (1993, Whitney Ransick). . . . ¶ April 26 at 8: A program of Merce Cunningham dances on film and video.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—A retrospective of films starring Joan Crawford. April 23 at 2: "Untamed" (1929, Jack Conway). . . . ¶ April 24 at 2: "Mannequin" (†). . . . ¶ April 24 at 4: "Mildred Pierce" (1945, Michael Curtiz).

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of films by American independent filmmakers. April 26 at 7: "Metropolitan" (1990, Whit Stillman). . . . ¶ April 26 at 9: "sex, lies, and videotape" (1989, Steven Soderbergh), with James Spader, Peter Gallagher, Andie MacDowell, and Laura San Giacomo.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 20 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "La Nuit de Varennes" (1981, Ettore Scola; in French), with Harvey Keitel and Marcello Mastroianni.

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—April 20 at 7 and 9: "The Exiles" (1989, Richard Kaplan). . . . ¶ April 21 at 7 and 9: A program of films by Jonas Mekas. . . . ¶ April 22 at 7 and April 23-24 at 4 and 6: Five different programs of films originally shown at Cinema 16. . . . ¶ April 22-24 at 8: Three different programs of old and new Super 8 films.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Through April 24, a program of films by Andy Warhol. Call for schedule and screening times.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-0824)—A retrospective of Shiro Toyoda films. April 22 at 6:30: "Marital Relations" (1956).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Bad Girls—Madeleine Stowe, Mary Stuart Masterson, Drew Barrymore, and Andie MacDowell play four Wild West prostitutes who strap on six-shooters and band together to retrieve their stolen life savings. With James LeGros, James Russo, Robert Loggia, and Dermot Mulroney. Directed by Jonathan Kaplan. Opening April 22.

Brainscan—A techno-thriller in which a violent virtual-reality game proves to be not so virtual after all. With Edward Furlong, Frank Langella, and T. Ryder Smith. Directed by John Flynn. Opening April 22.

Chasers—Dennis Hopper directed this comedy about two Navy men (Tom Berenger and William McNamara) who have been assigned to transport a prisoner back to base. Their convict is a young female sailor (Erika Eleniak) who has been sentenced to seven years in the brig for assaulting an officer and desertion, and who has escape on her mind. Opening April 22.

The Inkwell—Matty Rich ("Straight Out of Brooklyn") directed this story, set in the mid-seventies, about an eccentric young man (Larenz Tate) who spends the summer with his conservative aunt and uncle in a wealthy black enclave on Martha's Vineyard. With Joe Morton, Suzzanne Douglas, Glynn Turman, Vanessa Bell Calloway, and Duane Martin. Opening April 22.

Sunday's Children—Written by Ingmar Bergman and directed by his son, Daniel Bergman. With Thommy Berggren, Henrik Linnros, and Lena Endre. In Swedish. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening April 20.

CURRENT FILMS

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Backbeat—Directed by Iain Softley. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, and Tower East.)

Belle Époque—An aging eccentric painter (Fernando Fernán Gómez) chatters about the chaos of thirties Spain from the vantage of his rural home; a murder and two suicides frame his story. But it's still frivolous art-house kitsch—a roll-in-the-hay comedy that convulses the gelato-and-cappuccino crowd every time a naïve young deserter (Jorge Sanz) succumbs to one of the artist's four attractive daughters (Miriam Díaz-Aroca, Maribel Verdú, Ariadna Gil, and Penélope Cruz). The movie lacks invention and surprise and, in the end, is even morally conventional. Directed by Fernando Trueba. In Spanish.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Bitter Moon—Roman Polanski's rivetingly weird new movie tells the story of two married couples who meet on a cruise ship. Nigel (Hugh Grant) and Fiona (Kristin Scott Thomas), a proper pair of Brits, are obviously a little bored with each other; voluptuous Mimi (Emmanuelle Seigner) and her wheelchair-bound husband, Oscar (Peter Coyote), are locked in a destructive relationship in which their mutual passion can be expressed only as cruelty. Polanski can't quite muster the icy absurdist rigor that made his early pictures so distinctive, and the big erotic set pieces play like an "SCTV" parody of "Last Tango in Paris." The couples' sadistic gamesmanship isn't nearly as disturbing—or as funny—as it should be, because the staging keeps turning garish and theatrical, as if Polanski couldn't stop reminding us how naughty he is. His style betrays a kind of creative panic: it's Buñuel with an elbow in your ribs. Also with Victor Banerjee.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/11/94.) (Cinema 3rd Avenue, Quad Cinema, and Thalia.)

Four Weddings and a Funeral—Everything that depicts nuptial chaos is funny—particularly Rowan Atkinson's self-contained bit as a novice priest who blows a mental fuse during a marriage service and soldiers on with panicky determination. But the central relationship, between a British commitment-phobe (Hugh Grant) and an all too easy American (the flat, inexplicable Andie MacDowell), makes for few sparks and less sense. The setup is too arch to support the movie's detour into poignance, though John Hannah does give a moving reading of W. H. Auden's "Funeral Blues." Grant's goofy charm holds the comedy aloft—he rises like a fuzzy balloon—even if what he does is just a heart-throb version of Tom Conti's woolly comic style. Mike Newell directed Richard Curtis's script; co-starring Simon Callow, Kristin Scott Thomas, and James Fleet.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, and Columbus Circle.)

KOBAL COLLECTION

At Film Forum 2, King Vidor's "The Crowd."

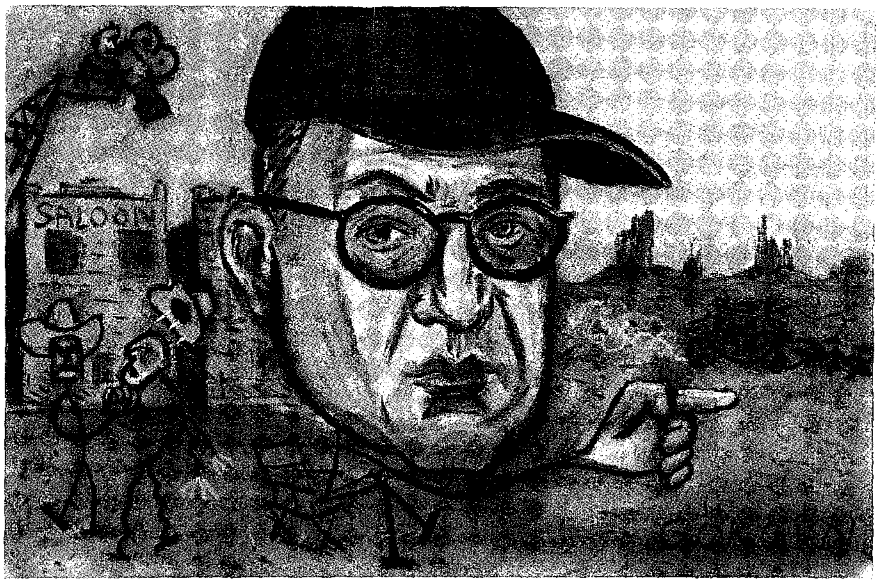
The House of the Spirits—Adapted from the novel by Isabel Allende, and directed by Bille August, this is really quite an achievement. It brings together Jeremy Irons, Meryl Streep, Winona Ryder, Antonio Banderas, and Vanessa Redgrave and insures that, without exception, they all give their worst performances ever. It all starts in Latin America in the nineteen-twenties, with Irons as Esteban Trueba, a devilish patriarch with a wife (Streep) who is clairvoyant, though strangely unable to see how terrible this movie is going to be. Then there's his creepy sister, played by Glenn Close—the only performer to emerge with a scrap of dignity. One generation down, his errant daughter (Ryder) is torn between thoughtful voice-overs ("Our memory is fragile") and soupy talk with Antonio Banderas: "I love you and you love me, and that's what matters. . . . I hear you've started to make political speeches." And so on, for decades. It's hard to name the low point of this stinker, but in the end it has to be Irons' accent. If you thought Clint Eastwood doing John Huston in "White Hunter, Black Heart" sounded silly, get a load of Jeremy Irons: he sounds like John Huston doing Clint Eastwood doing James Stewart doing Anthony Quinn. A baffling blend of the earnest and the sloppy, "House of the Spirits" turns into the funniest Hollywood movie of the nineties without ever being any fun.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Hudsucker Proxy—It's 1958, and Norville Barnes (Tim Robbins) is a schmuck from out of town, come to make his fortune in New York. Meanwhile, Hudsucker Industries, headed by the scheming Sidney J. Mussberger (Paul Newman), is looking for a total idiot to stand in as president for a while. Slap the two together, throw in a motormouth journalist (Jennifer Jason Leigh), and you've made yourself a new kind of comedy: retro-screwball. Shouldn't moviemakers be investigating the modern implications of screwball, instead of retreading old ground? Still, Joel and Ethan Coen (who wrote the screenplay with Sam Raimi) know every inch of that ground, and the resulting act of homage provides their most likable film since "Raising Arizona." Joel Coen directed.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, New York Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

In the Name of the Father—Jim Sheridan's ragged, fascinating new movie is based on the autobiography of Gerry Conlon, a Belfast Catholic who spent nearly fifteen years in British prisons for a crime he didn't commit. Conlon (Daniel Day-Lewis) and three friends were accused of participating in the 1974 bombing of a pub near London, in which five people were killed; the only evidence against Conlon was his own confession, extracted from him by means of a brutal police interrogation. When Sheridan and his co-screenwriter, Terry George, try to function as historians, the movie feels shaky. But when Gerry and his father (Pete Postlethwaite)—who has been convicted on a different charge—get to prison, the filmmakers begin to explore their real theme, which is the intimate emotional consequences of oppression and prejudice. Day-Lewis, Postlethwaite, and Don Baker (playing a chillingly self-possessed I.R.A. man) are superb. Also with Emma Thompson and Corin Redgrave.—T.R. (1/24/94) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult—The third installment in the "Naked Gun" series stars Leslie Nielsen as Frank Drebin, but then nobody else could star as Frank Drebin. Nielsen has taken the art of deadpan into uncharted territory, marrying a polite, paternal manner to a state of acute mental shutdown. The new movie, directed by Peter Segal, doesn't always get it right, but there is plenty of random chaos, leading to a nuclear-envelope scene at the Academy Awards, and the parodies keep on springing out of nowhere. Some work better than others; the seventies scene, complete with giant Afro, is a joy, whereas the "Thelma & Louise" rip-off goes nowhere and fizzles out. With Priscilla Presley and Fred Ward.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, East 85th Street, and Festival. . . . ¶ 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza; through April 21.)

The Paper—Ron Howard's big-city-newspaper comedy is a game try at reviving a great Hollywood genre. The movie—which follows Henry Hackett (Michael Keaton), the Metro editor of a struggling New York tabloid, through a single, absurdly gruelling day—gets most of its laughs by constantly piling fresh difficulties on top of already impossible circumstances. Keaton is at his best here, which means that his mind appears to be working at warp speed, and with a ber-



At MOMA, *a series of movies by John Ford.*

AHMET GORGUN

serk, reckless lucidity. Randy Quaid, Marisa Tomei, Robert Duvall, and Jason Alexander create lively, funny characters for Keaton to bounce off, and Howard lets the actors' energy drive the movie. Unfortunately, some inappropriate yuppie philosophizing starts creeping in toward the end; it's clear that Howard and the screenwriters, David and Stephen Koepp, aren't quite willing to go all the way with the heartless, cynical wit of the genre.—T.R. (3/28/94) (Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

Philadelphia—Tom Hanks plays a lawyer dismissed from his firm, apparently for incompetence, but really because he has AIDS. Enter Denzel Washington as a personal-injury attorney—relaxed, witty, and homophobic, but prepared to fight for justice. The result is an unorthodox blend of courtroom drama and old-style weepie, and somehow it comes off. With Jonathan Demme in charge there's a guarantee of taste and skill—if anything, the movie is too optimistic, convinced that everyone in America can be won round to its own standards of tolerance. Of course it should stand up for gay rights, but do we also need a speech about how wonderful lawyers are? Fortunately, this preachiness never swamps the picture, thanks largely to spirited playing from Tom Hanks, who looks full of life right up to the end. The movie is affecting, sometimes silly, but determined to take risks.—A.L. (12/27/93-1/3/94) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, and Criterion Center.)

The Piano—Sometime in the last century, a Scottish mute called Ada (Holly Hunter) travels to New Zealand with her beloved piano and her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin). She is engaged to Stewart (Sam Neill), but it is his right-hand man, Baines (Harvey Keitel), who becomes the focus of her interest. He buys the piano, and gives her a chance to win it back: an erotic agreement that gathers intensity and drives the film onward to its gasping conclusion. The writer and director, Jane Campion, has turned her native New Zealand, with its desolate beaches and writhing forests, into a potent backdrop; the rain and mud make the love story look like trench warfare—you come away from the movie battered and amazed. It's almost too wrought and compressed for its own good, but the performances breathe it full of life. Hunter, especially, gives a fiery portrait of a rebellious Victorian spirit.—A.L. (11/29/93) (Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Reality Bites—Ben Stiller's film is a romantic comedy about what has come to be called Generation X. The characters are just out of college, and they're not thrilled about their prospects: they're overeducated and underemployed, and no one seems to know, or care, what they're going through. The picture has its charms: Stiller's direction gives it an appropriately loose, drifting rhythm; Winona Ryder, in the central role, has a fresh, natural style that makes even the most contrived dialogue sound authentic. But the story is essentially a thin and conventional romantic triangle, straight out of thirties Hollywood; the filmmakers try to disguise the fluffiness by unleashing a torrent of trash-culture allusions and sociological truisms. Also with Stiller, Ethan Hawke, Janeane Garofalo, Steve Zahn, and John Mahoney. The script is by Helen Childress.—T.R. (3/7/94) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, and 62nd & Broadway.)

Red Rock West—This clever thriller about a good-hearted loner (Nicolas Cage) who trips and falls into a murder plot ranks tops among low-budget neo-noirs. Taut and deadpan-witty, it makes spooky use of the setting—a small, windblown Western town—and its surprises actually add up: for once, an angular narrative serves to sharpen the characters. Dennis Hopper and J. T. Walsh do their freshest, snappiest work in years, and Lara Flynn Boyle is a tense, ambiguous love object. Most important, Cage's shaggy hangdog charm and core of intelligence and rectitude keep the audience rooting for the hero after several dumb moves. John Dahl's direction, like the script he wrote with his brother Rick, is sure and economical. Dwight Yoakam contributes a piquant cameo as a tough, helpful truck driver.—M.S. (Cinema Village.)

Schindler's List—The story of Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), a dashing and resourceful German Catholic businessman who saved over a thousand Polish Jews from almost certain annihilation by the Nazis, is extraordinary even by the standards of Holocaust literature. Steven Spielberg's film, adapted by Steven Zaillian from the 1982 book by Thomas Keneally, runs better than three hours and doesn't seem a minute too long. Spielberg respects the essential mystery of the protagonist's heroism, and uses his prodigious skills with an intensity that he hasn't shown in a long time: he captures images of experiences that most of us thought we would never see represented adequately on the screen. This is by far the finest, fullest dramatic (i.e., nondocumentary) film ever made about the Holocaust. Along with Neeson, who is brilliant, the standouts in the large cast are Ralph Fiennes, Ben Kingsley, and Embeth Davidtz. The wonderfully expressive black-and-white cinematography is by Janusz Kaminski.—T.R. (12/20/93) (34th St. East, First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency.)

Sunday's Children—With Thommy Berggren, directed by Daniel Bergman. In Swedish. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Film Forum.)

A Tale of Winter—The second film in Eric Rohmer's current cycle, "Tales of the Four Seasons" (the first, "A Tale of Springtime," was released here in 1992), is, as usual, a slow, closely observed story of romantic indecisiveness. The heroine, Félicie (Charlotte Véry), is an irritating woman, of the sort that Rohmer often treats with great tenderness: she keeps two ardent suitors at arm's length while she clings to the faint possibility of a reunion with a long-lost love. She's so stubbornly idealistic that she can't accept the imperfect joys available to her. It's Rohmer's pleasure to reward her for her fanaticism and her irrational patience. His aesthetic philosophy is to stake out, and hold, a position from which he can ambush the rare life-altering event, the moment of grace, the miracle. He captures one of those at the end of this picture, and you smile at its aptness and its beauty. In French.—T.R. (4/11/94) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould—Glenn Gould, as scorned and revered as any figure in modern music, died in 1982. François Girard's new movie honors his strong-willed, idiosyncratic genius with a suitably offbeat approach: a bunch of little films, none lasting more than a few minutes, all of them angling for a new take on the pianist's life and work—thirty-two ways of looking at Glenn Gould. Scenes from his boyhood and professional career are neatly dramatized; the Canadian actor Colm Feore plays the adult Gould, though he never, thank goodness, tries to reproduce his manner at the keyboard. In between come interviews, dashes of animation, and even a sequence shot in X-ray. The whole enterprise is designed to skirt the traditional traps of the music movie; instead of a laborious bio-pic, we get a sly, quick-witted meditation on a character always likely to elude our grasp. The finale—a Gould recording of Bach is carried into deep space by a Voyager spacecraft—leaves you gawking.—A.L. (4/18/94) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl—This German documentary is a profoundly unsettling three hours at the movies. Riefenstahl, now ninety-one years old, made two brilliant documentaries—"Triumph of the Will" (1935) and "Olympia" (1938)—under the aegis of the Nazi Party. She was known as "Hitler's favorite filmmaker," but has always insisted that her movies were never meant to advance a political program—that she looked at contemporary events with the pure, disinterested eye of an artist. Subjected to on-camera interrogation by this film's director, Ray Müller, she sticks to that story. If you believe her, she's one kind of monster; if you don't, she's another. The juxtaposition of her grotesque apologia with clips from her grandiose, strikingly composed films makes for a bizarre and sobering spectacle. In German.—T.R. (3/28/94) (Film Forum.)

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael.)

Ben-Hur (1925)—The Ramon Novarro–Francis X. Bushman version; it was a remake even then, but M-G-M put five million dollars into it, and so much Amazing Gargantuan, Stupendous, and Mighty Biblical Pageantry that vast numbers of viewers were swept off their feet. There's the galley manned by a thousand slaves, the sea battle between Romans and ancient pirates, the Valley of the Lepers, and the chariot race staged in a mammoth stadium, with every L.A. man, woman, and child lying about as a super. Novarro has his adolescent charm and beauty, and Bushman's nose is majestically Roman. Directed by Fred Niblo. Silent.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; April 25.)

Mannequin (1938)—A star vehicle in which the star—Joan Crawford—is a lyric talker and so solemnly noble that you want to strangle her. Poetic flights are her specialty as she rises from Hester Street to penthouses, suffering from emotional conflicts every step of the way. Alan Curtis, a corner loafer with a mean slant to his fedora, is the bad egg whom she marries and stays loyal to, even after she meets Spencer Tracy, a self-made shipping tycoon, who has been looking all his life for her kind of nobility. As the picture drags along from one crisis to another, the self-righteousness in Crawford's voice seems to get throatier and more grating. The director, Frank Borzage, gives some care to the tenement sequences, but he's perfunctory when the locales become swanky. The unconvincing script (from a Katherine Brush story) is no more than an excuse for M-G-M gloss and glamour; a simple statement of the truth would solve the heroine's wracking problems. With Mary Philips as the heroine's no-nonsense friend, and Leo Gorcey, Ralph Morgan, and Elisabeth Risdon.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 24.)

Ride the High Country (1962)—Perhaps the most simple and traditional and graceful of all modern Westerns. Sam Peckinpah's small (and humane) classic is unassuming, and its elegiac poetry is plainer than that of Altman's "McCabe & Mrs. Miller," although the emotional complexity is comparable. That unpublicized fine actor Joel McCrea plays a former marshal who gets a job transporting gold; he signs up another former lawman, Randolph Scott, who has been working as a carnival sharpshooter, to help him. In the film's most astonishing and original sequence, the marriage of an innocent young girl (Mariette Hartley) takes place in a brothel in a mining camp, and the terrified bride realizes that the groom's brothers expect to share her; McCrea and Scott help her escape. In the film's most memorable single image, the old Westerner (McCrea) sinks to the bottom of the frame to die. The cinematography is by Lucien Ballard at his peerless best.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 21.)

Up the River (1930)—The setting is Sing Sing, and damned if the inmates don't file into their cells at night and break into melodious lullabies, their trained voices ringing in the stone corridors. In this coeducational prison, gracious women prisoners engage in badinage—and occasional dalliance—with the men. The picture—a true curiosity—started out to be something quite different. A highly publicized uprising in Auburn Prison in New York led to a spate of plays and movies about prison life. On Broadway, Spencer Tracy had a great success in "The Last Mile"; M-G-M rushed to prepare "The Big House," a melodrama, and Fox commissioned Maurine Watkins to write "Up the River," which was also to be a melodrama. But "The Big House" came out first and Fox was going to cancel "Up the River" when John Ford, who was scheduled to direct it and had already hired Tracy, came up with the idea of turning it into a spoofy comedy featuring prison baseball instead of a riot. In the finale, Tracy and Warren Hymer, who have broken out in order to help their buddy, Humphrey Bogart, who had got caught in a jam after he'd been released, go back in, so they can play in a big baseball game. Bogart here is not much more than a shiny-faced, gum-chewing, smiling juvenile with a long, skinny jaw, but Tracy, making his film début, is assured and lively as a cocky, tough mug—he keeps his scenes going by a lot of byplay with the other actors. Still, the big galoot Warren Hymer, playing a blissful sort of innocent stupe, gets most of the laughs. The picture—which is slow and bizarrely corny, especially when Bogart is at home with his proper Mom, or goes on a hayride with his convict pals—was very popular. With Claire Luce, William Collier, Sr., Ward Bond, Sharon Lynne, Noel Francis, Wilbur Mack, and Morgan Wallace.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 22.)

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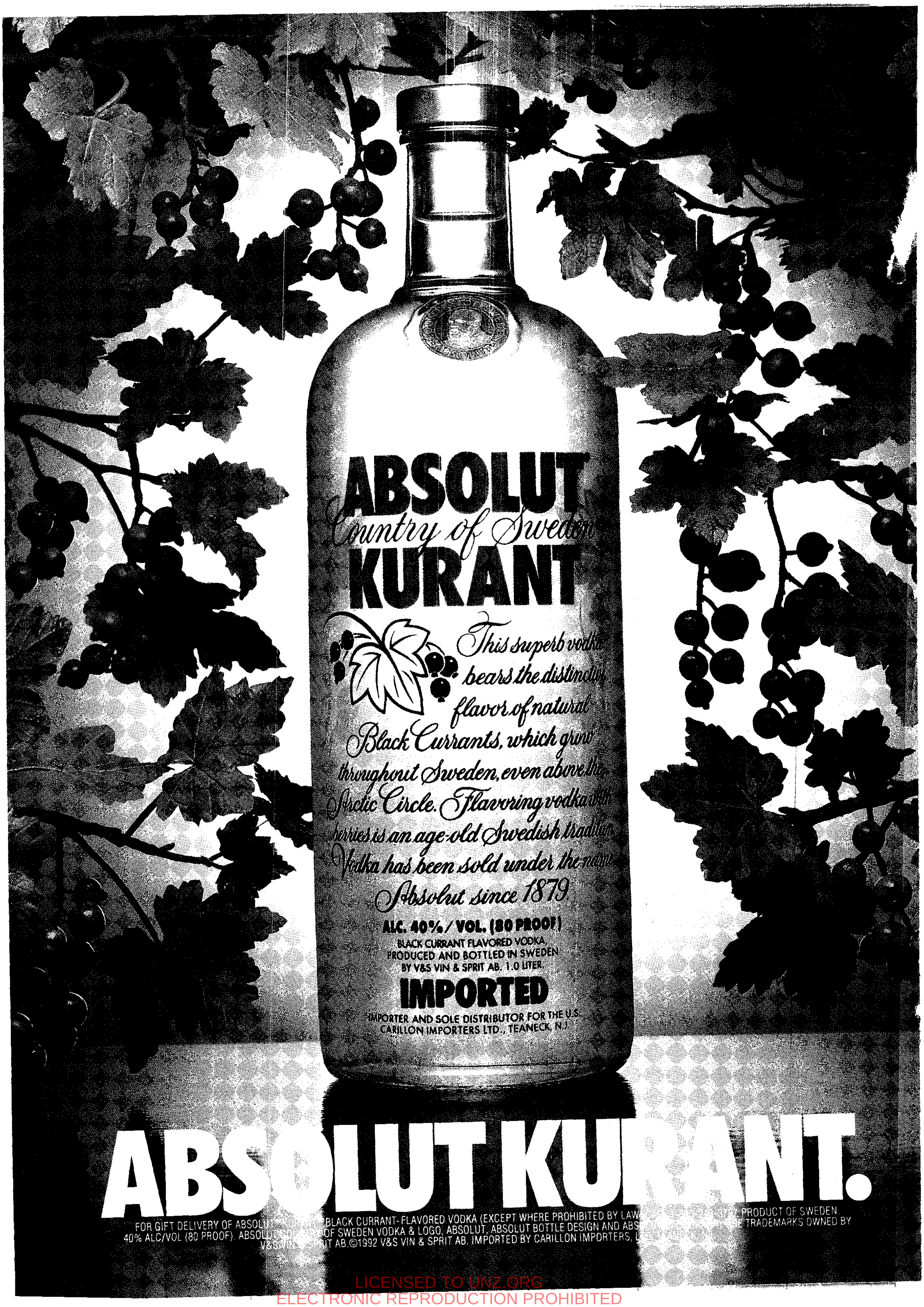
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THE NEW YORKER

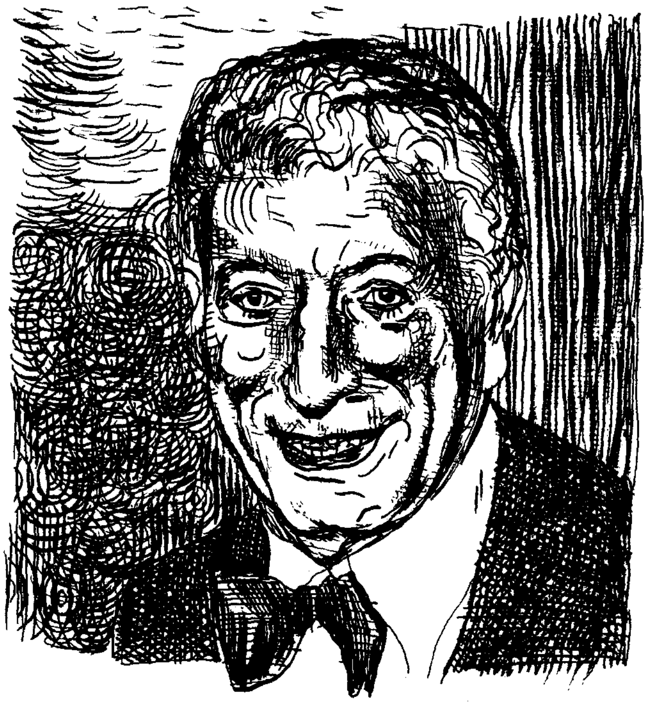
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

TONY BENNETT, IN THE MIX

It is cool these days to think Tony Bennett is cool. Cool people agree on this. In fact, it has become so widely agreed upon and so cool that even uncool people have caught on, and that means that thinking Tony Bennett is cool is no longer diagnostic proof of one's own coolness. This is a problem someone will have to work on. In the meantime, it can be noted that everyone and his brother—cool and otherwise—was scrambling for tickets to the "MTV Unplugged" taping last Tuesday evening, which featured the (cool) Tony Bennett, with guest appearances by some of his new, cool fans: namely, Elvis Costello, who has always been cool; k. d. lang (ditto); Evan Dando, of The Lemonheads, who might be too cool for his own good; and J Mascis, of Dinosaur Jr, who is so dorky that he is beyond the issue of coolness entirely.

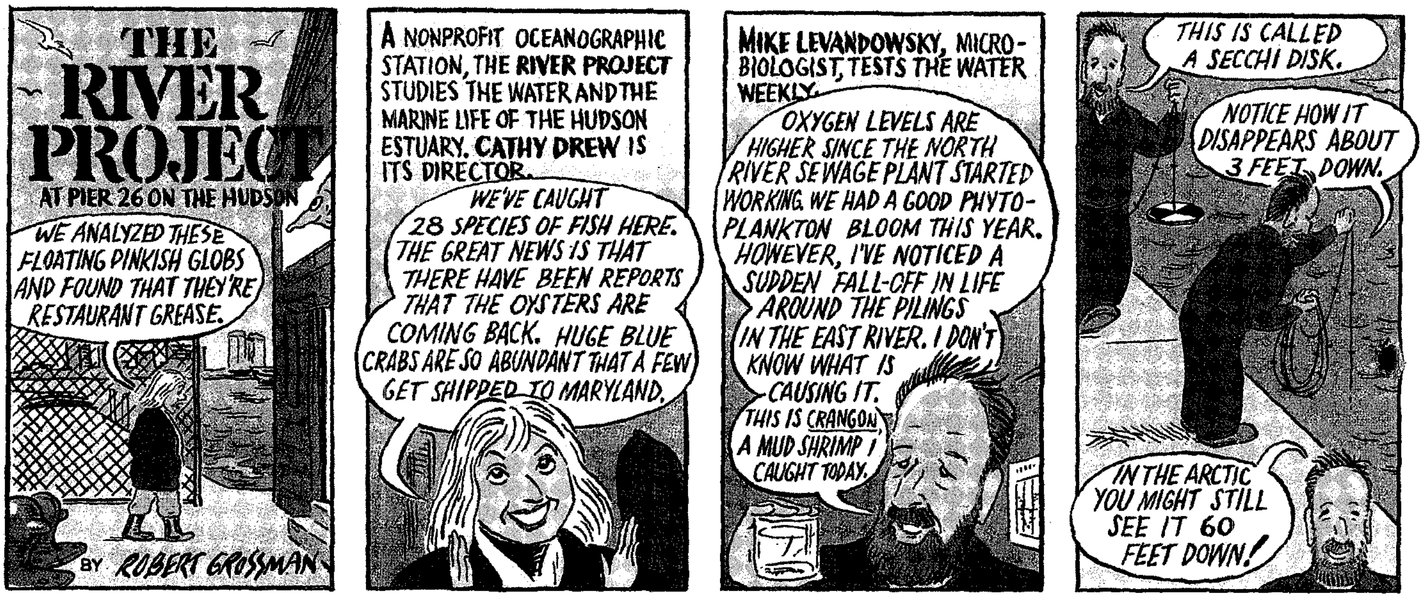
For the show, which was taped at the Sony Music Studios, at West Fifty-fourth Street and Tenth Avenue, and will be broadcast later this spring, Mr. Bennett, who is sixty-seven years old, was dressed in a ventless blue serge suit, a light-blue shirt, and a narrow print tie. He has a good tan, nice teeth, and a cap of silver hair, which in the studio light appeared slightly purple. He looked incredibly happy. His voice is smooth and rich and light, like whipped butter. Whenever he hit an especially challenging note, Elvis Costello, who was seated across from us until he joined Mr. Bennett onstage, would purse his lips, scrunch up his eyes, shake his head appreciatively, and mouth the word, "Whew!" Between songs, Mr. Bennett tossed off cool-guy patter, like "You are so beautiful" and "I've been a very fortunate popular singer through the seasons" and "This is from the wonderful American popular songbook" and—to Ralph Sharon, his music director and longtime piano player—"Boy, that brings back a lot of memories, doesn't it, Ralph?" Ralph, who is a tiny, gray-haired, droopy-faced guy, looked up at Mr. Bennett and smiled, but didn't confirm or deny.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GARY PANTER



Record-company guys have figured out that it's cool to think that Tony Bennett is cool, so they were at the taping in force. They greeted each other with record-company-guy-in-the-know patter, like, "The man's a legend!" and "The man is amazing!" and "The man is a total, amazing legend!" and "Hey, man, I didn't know you were still pimping for Mercury Records!" When the evening got really romantic—that is, when k. d. lang and Mr. Bennett cuddled up and sang a tender duet version of "Moonglow"—the record-company guys were quite moved; during the short break, they said quite-moved-record-company-guy things, like, "My *God*, we could cross-promote the hell out of this!" and "We could repackage him and bump up the price and have a very merry Christmas!" and "This could be bigger than Streisand!" and "This could be as hot as Jerry Jeff Walker touring with the Butthole Surfers!" and "I like your thinking! Let's do lunch!"

What's cool about Tony Bennett is that, unlike people who have always been cool, he has been to the other side and back, so he seemed unafraid to do uncool things, like saying, "I want you to all snap your fingers for me!" and, when everyone did, saying, "Now, *that's* music!" He would also pat the side of the piano and say, "Take it, Ralph!" At the end of the two-hour taping, he did the most uncool thing of all: he bowed slightly and then beamed at the audience and said, "This has been one of the most wonderful nights of my life."

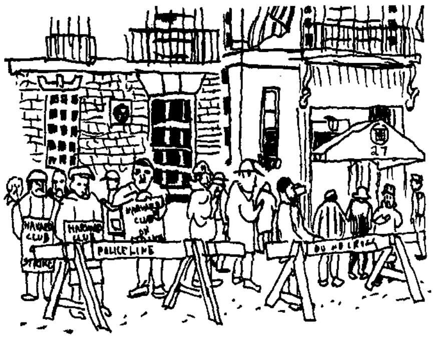

THE RIVER PROJECT
AT PIER 26 ON THE HUDSON
WE ANALYZED THESE FLOATING PINKISH GLOBS AND FOUND THAT THEY'RE RESTAURANT GREASE.
BY ROBERT GROSSMAN
A NONPROFIT OCEANOGRAPHIC STATION, THE RIVER PROJECT STUDIES THE WATER AND THE MARINE LIFE OF THE HUDSON ESTUARY. CATHY DREW IS ITS DIRECTOR.
WE'VE CAUGHT 28 SPECIES OF FISH HERE. THE GREAT NEWS IS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS THAT THE OYSTERS ARE COMING BACK. HUGE BLUE CRABS ARE SO ABUNDANT THAT A FEW GET SHIPPED TO MARYLAND.
MIKE LEVANDOWSKY, MICRO-BIOLOGIST, TESTS THE WATER WEEKLY.
OXYGEN LEVELS ARE HIGHER SINCE THE NORTH RIVER SEWAGE PLANT STARTED WORKING. WE HAD A GOOD PHYTO-PLANKTON BLOOM THIS YEAR. HOWEVER, I'VE NOTICED A SUDDEN FALL-OFF IN LIFE AROUND THE PILINGS IN THE EAST RIVER. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IS CAUSING IT.
THIS IS CRANGON, A MUD SHRIMP I CAUGHT TODAY.
THIS IS CALLED A SECCHI DISK.
NOTICE HOW IT DISAPPEARS ABOUT 3 FEET DOWN.
IN THE ARCTIC YOU MIGHT STILL SEE IT 60 FEET DOWN!

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS ON WEST FORTY-FOURTH

THE other day at the Harvard Club, while its hundred and eighteen waiters, busboys, dishwashers, maids, and bartenders were on strike, Donald L. Shapiro, the club's president, was in the main dining room, enjoying a lunch of poached salmon and asparagus vinaigrette. Mr. Shapiro, who was wearing a natty blue suit, was about to explain the labor dispute to us, but first he filled us in on himself: he is an alumnus of the college and the business school, and is the president of New York Federal Savings Bank. In a corner, plates clattered cacophonously. Mr. Shapiro explained that the club's managers were carrying out many of the striking employees' tasks, with mixed results. "Look, there's our controller," he said. "He's pouring water at that table over there."

Outside, on West Forty-fourth Street, where Local 6 of the Hotel, Restaurant & Club Employees Union had first formed a picket line on Easter Sunday, about twenty men and women were wearing signs that said "HARVARD CLUB ON STRIKE" and telling anyone who was interested that Henry Kissinger had crossed the line one evening. They were also discussing their worries about the tough tone of some recent letters from management—letters suggesting that workers might be fired, as a result of the strike. The fiscal 1993 annual report of the Harvard Club, which is owned by its members and is not legally connected to the university, mentions that it is "relatively prosperous"; that membership increased last year to ten thousand five hundred and twenty-two; and that the institution is setting aside a quarter of a million dollars annually toward exercising its option to buy a building next door. But at lunch Mr. Shapiro maintained that the finances of the club are not as rosy as one might surmise. "All clubs have seen revenues decline because of the recession, and changes in the tax laws could exacerbate the situation," he said. "Business lunches aren't deductible anymore at the same percentage they have been, and membership isn't going to be deductible this year. As our revenues declined, we found our labor costs going up. We've said to the union, 'Help us be more efficient.' "

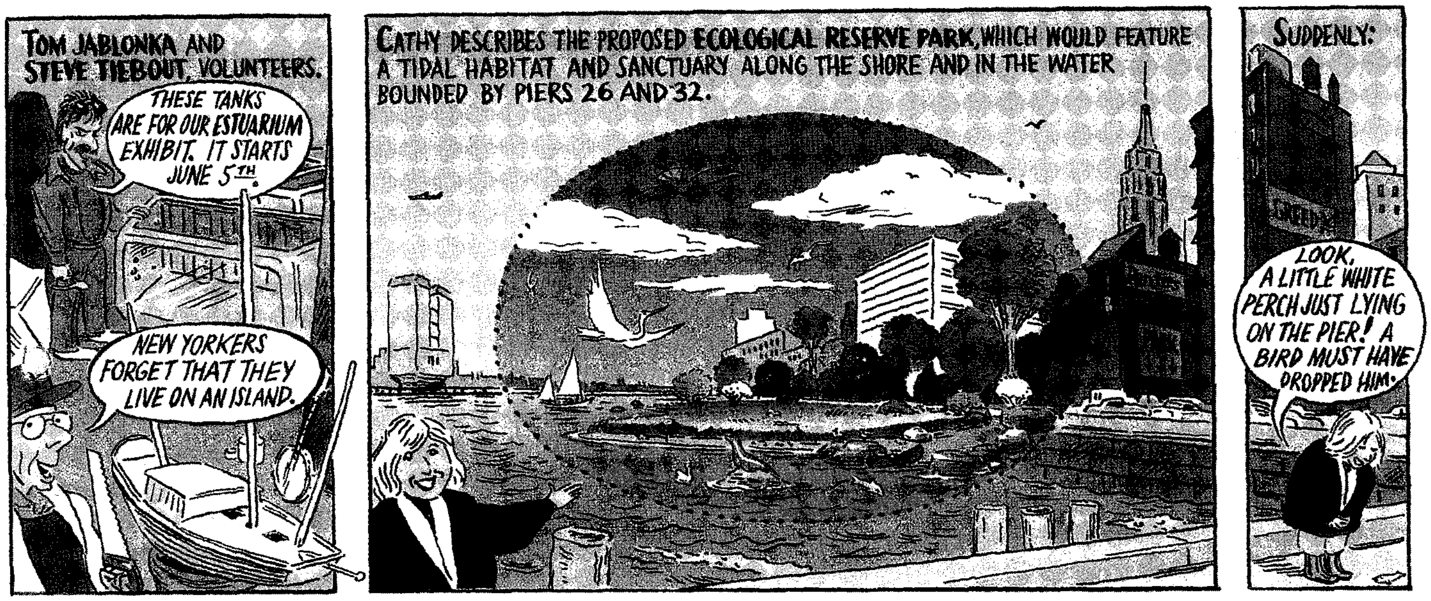
The efficiency request that has most antagonized the union, we learned, involves health insurance: Mr. Shapiro wants the workers to contribute part of its cost. This would mean that a Harvard Club maid who makes $21,528 a year would pay five or six hundred dollars a year for insurance to cover her family. "Isn't it pretty standard across the country that health-care costs are an ever-burgeoning portion of employers' costs? And isn't it reasonable to ask our employees to share in that cost?" Mr. Shapiro asked.


POLICE LINE

It was time for Mr. Shapiro to return to his office, so we went back out to talk with the strikers. One, Mario Cardet, told us that he was sixty-two and had worked at the club for nearly thirty-four years, most recently as a dining-room captain. Medical insurance, he said, was his primary concern. "We don't have a great plan to begin with—it doesn't cover everything," he said, and he told us he'd just finished paying off seven thousand dollars in bills incurred when he suffered a heart attack in 1988.

Standing nearby were some Yale Club and Century Association employees, who had come to lend moral support. A bartender from the Yale Club said his union's contract would expire at the end of the month and predicted that he, too, would end up striking. "All the clubs in the area are waiting to see what happens here," he told us.

Just then, shouts of exultation filled the air. Someone had got hold of a copy of a letter that a club member and real-estate investor named Glen Bigelow had written recently to Mr. Shapiro, questioning his handling of the dispute. In closing, Mr. Bigelow wrote, "I also think it is important to remember that for all of us who have had the privilege of attending Harvard it does not hurt to think about those people who did not have the opportunity, and have to work hard to support themselves and their families."

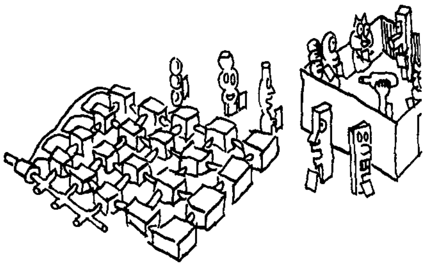

TOM JABLONKA AND STEVE TIEBOUT, VOLUNTEERS.
THESE TANKS ARE FOR OUR ESTUARIUM EXHIBIT. IT STARTS JUNE 5TH.
NEW YORKERS FORGET THAT THEY LIVE ON AN ISLAND.
CATHY DESCRIBES THE PROPOSED ECOLOGICAL RESERVE PARK, WHICH WOULD FEATURE A TIDAL HABITAT AND SANCTUARY ALONG THE SHORE AND IN THE WATER BOUNDED BY PIERS 26 AND 32.
SUDDENLY:
LOOK, A LITTLE WHITE PERCH JUST LYING ON THE PIER! A BIRD MUST HAVE DROPPED HIM.

CYBERSPACE HAS A V.I.P. LOUNGE, TOO

STACY HORN is the founder and owner of Echo, the city's largest electronic bulletin board, and she runs it out of her home, a small, fifth-floor West Village walkup. She has two personal computers, and running into the apartment are thirty-five telephone lines that connect to thirty-five modems. Red lights on the modems blink to announce incoming calls; the modems are arranged on shelves at one end of Horn's place in the manner of an art piece. Horn is a friendly, petite woman in her mid-thirties, with thick black hair that frames her face Cleopatra style. "Echo is an electronic salon," she said one recent evening, sitting in front of the modems, and describing the mix of topics—arts, politics, New York life—that the members of Echo (there are approximately two thousand of them) talk about via computer and modem. At the moment, the most active of Echo's members, all of whom pay $19.95 a month to engage in ongoing electronic conversations called conferences, live in downtown Manhattan, but Horn is ambitious and wants to expand to other cities on the East Coast. "It's like Donald Trump puts up this building that sticks way up in the air, whereas I'm building all these little connections you can't see," she said.

As the owner of the equipment on which Echo runs, Horn has absolute power over what goes on in the Echo community; it is not unusual to see her referred to on-line as "Lord Horn." One of her achievements has been to attract women to the bulletin board—they make up nearly forty per cent of Echo's membership—and she has done so, in part, by strongly discouraging electronic sexual harassment, which is an unpleasant aspect of the vast, chaotic sprawl of bulletin boards and other on-line services that constitute cyberspace. "If someone is sending electronic messages saying 'Ooh, baby, baby, what're you wearing,' you can tell me, and I'll send that person E-mail telling him that what he's doing is uncool," Horn said. If someone persists in behaving in an offensive manner, Horn added, she can kick that person off Echo—an electronic banning known on this bulletin board as a "kevorking."

Earlier this month word spread on Echo that a self-selected group of perhaps forty members were quietly meeting (via modem) at an exclusive night club, Xenophobia, between the hours of 11 P.M. and 7:30 A.M. Xenophobia was established as a "private conference," which means it was fitted with a software "filter" designed to keep uninvited people out. But unlike other private conferences on the bulletin board—for example, the 12 Step conference for recovering addicts—membership in Xenophobia was based simply on whom you knew. Moreover, the conference was not announced on Echo's list of conferences (as, say, the 12 Step is), which made some people think that it was supposed to be a cliquish kind of secret. Clubs like Xenophobia are, of course, a fact of life in the real, concrete-and-glass world of Manhattan, but in cyberspace they are almost unknown. Many people join electronic communities like Echo precisely because they offer a refuge from the snobbery of the f2f (face-to-face) world which can make people unhappy and lonely, and some members of Echo were startled and hurt to find out that this sort of thing existed in the electronic world, too, and that once again they were left out.



At the behest of those members troubled by the opening of Xenophobia, Horn created a space on Echo (that is, on the hard drive of her computer) that enables people to discuss their feelings about Xenophobia. From there, the following messages (known as "posts") have been taken.

80:2) Yuri Prizel 03-APR-94 19:33

The concept of Echo, as I was given to understand, was to give people a forum to exchange ideas, points of view, concepts, philosophies, etc. The very existence of an "in crowd" is in direct contradiction to everything Echo allegedly stands for.

80:4) Gabriel 03-APR-94 19:37

Could someone identify this "in" crowd? You post as if it is already determined that such a crowd exists, but, frankly, I ain't convinced of it.

Some people argued that it was a mistake for people to have supposed that exclusivity wouldn't exist in cyberspace:

80:21) Jonathan Hayes 03-APR-94 21:42

I enjoy the myth that cyberspace is democratic. I think it's hilarious.

80:71) Steve B. 04-APR-94 13:17

Since Echo is a NY kind of place, then to be true to our physical surroundings we ought to have in-crowds and especially burly bouncers and haughty maître d's. Echo subscribers would be cheated out of the NY experience if we didn't have them.

80:74) Kevin 04-APR-94 14:10

Can I be the burly bouncer?

Others remained adamantly opposed to the principle of an exclusive night club in cyberspace.

80:224) Aurora Borealis 09-APR-94 12:35

Exclude me from your "club." If what you're doing is talking behind my back, do so. Believe me, I can take it. But there's no way on God's green earth you're going to convince me that what you're doing is either right or fair.

The final decision on what to do about Xenophobia rests, of course, with Lord Horn. For now, she said, she had no plans to close the club down. Though she is not a Xenophobia regular, she has visited, and reports that it's a place where some of the earliest members of Echo like to hang out and play electronic jokes on one another—computer-hacker-type things that, she said, outsiders would find hard to understand. "I know the idea of a private club is sort of unkind, and people may be hurt by it, but there's just no way you can stop things that happen in the physical world from being projected into the electronic world," she said.

But hadn't some people joined Echo in order to get away from exclusivity?

"People who join the electronic world expecting it to be better than the physical world will be disappointed," Horn said. "And if you expect everyone is going to be your friend, you'll be disappointed, too. I'm sorry. Echo is not Oz."

BOOK HIM

THIS being National Library Week, meet Rob Rucker, one of twenty-eight reference librarians in the General Research Division of the Central Research Building of the New York Public Library.

AGE: 29.

EDUCATION: M.S., Columbia University School of Library Service.

LOOK: Easygoing and shaggy-haired, not at all like librarians you remember from high school.

FIRST BOOK READ: "Here Comes the Bus," by Carolyn Haywood. "I think it's about little kids going to school, or something."

LAST BOOK READ: "A Fairly Honourable Defeat," by Iris Murdoch. "It's about normal people getting into bad situations."

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MOTTO: There's no such thing as a stupid question.

MOST UNUSUAL INQUIRY TO DATE: Man looking for book containing world's pancake recipes, in attempt to re-create the pancakes he ate at his local diner. "He was convinced 'those Greeks' had some kind of secret."

SOLUTION: Got him a printout of listings under subject heading "Pancakes, Waffles, etc."

MOST CHALLENGING INQUIRY TO DATE: Man looking for precise information on three subjects: photographs of Mt. Rushmore, detailed maps of trails and parking areas around Mt. Rushmore, books on plastic explosives.

SOLUTION: "I just did what I could. I went, 'Explosives—that's down on the first floor, in Science and Technology.' And I told him there was a Map Division. I mean, I just did it."

GOD AND MAN AT SHEA

IF you were at Shea Stadium last Monday for the Mets home opener against the Cubs, and you scanned the right-field mezzanine looking for something more interesting than the game (the Mets were pretty much out of it by the top of the third inning), you might have spotted William F. Buckley, Jr.—a beige windbreaker over a blue blazer over a gray crewneck, and a Mets cap on his head—taking in his very first major-league baseball game. He was there with Ira Glasser, the executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, with whom he shared French fries—and few political opinions. It was all Glasser's idea. Over the years, he and Buckley had debated the big issues on "Firing Line" and elsewhere, so when Glasser heard last fall that Buckley had told Charlie Rose he'd never been to a big-league ballgame, he respectfully engaged him, in a letter, about this. Thus began a correspondence in which Buckley thanked Glasser for "offering to save my soul," and Glasser, in a note dashed off after the opening-day date was set, promised to defend Buckley's right to remain seated during the singing of the national anthem.

They met last Monday at the A.C.L.U.'s offices on West Forty-third Street, and then took the No. 7 train to Flushing—Buckley's first subway ride in nearly thirty years. Inside Shea, they stood, side by side, for the national anthem, and then they got into what Buckley might call a colloquy, and what those sitting around them might have perceived as a guy who knows nothing about the game asking all sorts of questions of a guy who knows a lot. Glasser, a real fan, in a vinyl Mets jacket and a Brooklyn Dodgers cap, explained the positioning of fielders, the sacrifice fly, the stolen base, and Buckley seemed impressed. At one point, after the Mets manager, Dallas Green, executed an intricate "double switch"—changing the pitcher *and* substituting for a fielder in order to keep the new pitcher from batting in the Mets' half of the inning—Buckley inquired, "They do this intuitively?" By the ninth inning, with the Mets down four runs and the bases loaded with two outs, Buckley was ready to test his newfound knowledge; having surveyed the field, he turned to Glasser and asked, "Would this be a good bunting situation?"

When the game ended, and Buckley and Glasser had made their way out of the stadium, Glasser headed back to the subway. Buckley, having added to his understanding of the American experience, disappeared into a waiting limousine. ♦

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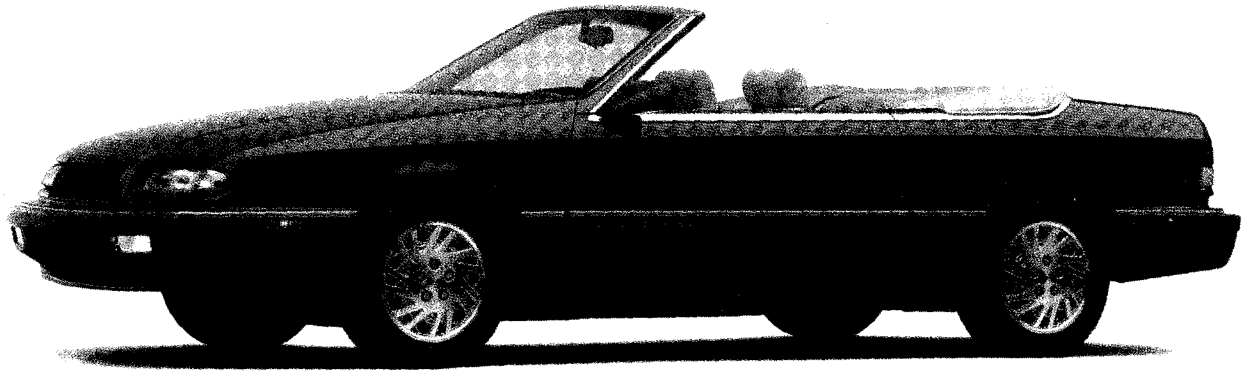

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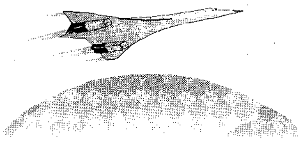

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ANNALS OF WAR

LOST IN RWANDA

Human-rights activists all over the world feared that their most prominent Rwandan colleague had died in the carnage.

BY LAWRENCE WESCHLER

Monique Mujawamariya, of Rwanda, had always been the one that the people at Human Rights Watch worried about the most. She was in New York City only last December, one of a group of human-rights monitors from countries throughout the world who were being honored by H.R.W. on the occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (A portfolio of Richard Avedon's portraits of those brave sentries appeared in the January 10th issue of *The New Yorker*.) Monique Mujawamariya had an almost regal bearing and showed an unnerving poise, especially given the fact that her face bore the scars of an assassination attempt, and she had received several death threats since. Because her personal danger was so great, she was chosen to represent the group during a symbolic call on the White House; it was thought that such a highly visible private audience with President Clinton might help shield her once she returned home. When Rwandans shake hands, they sometimes continue to hold the other person's hand; it's as if they were reluctant to abandon contact once it has been made. Monique, completely unaffected, held President Clinton's hand in her gentle clasp for much of the ten minutes of their meeting. Some people in New York suggested that it still might not be the best thing for her to return to her homeland right away, because of the ferocious tensions rapidly overwhelming her country. But she insisted that those very tensions necessitated her being there, doing her work, and she did go.

In many ways, Monique's conviction grew out of her personal circumstances. The daughter of a Hutu father and a Tutsi mother, she was married to a senior Rwandan Army officer, with whom she had three children. Monique's husband was in the habit of beating her savagely, she says, and ten years ago, in an extremely unusual move for a Rwandan woman, she walked out on him, taking her children with her. For several years, she struggled to earn an independent livelihood, finally getting a job as a social worker helping AIDS victims. (In addition to all its other problems, Rwanda is at the very epicenter of that disease's worldwide sway.) She also opened her home as a shelter for battered women and their families, and at one point was feeding seventeen people on her single paycheck.

Monique's involvement in human-rights work began in 1990. By that time, Rwanda was in the seventeenth year of the increasingly dictatorial and corrupt regime of Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu given to inciting ethnic animosities between the country's majority Hutu and minority (though historically dominant) Tutsi as a way of maintaining his rule. Since a series of terrible massacres around the time of the country's independence, in 1962, hundreds of thousands of Tutsi refugees have been consigned to often squalid camps immediately outside the country's borders, and in October of 1990 the primarily Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front, the R.P.F., launched a military incursion into the country, demanding the liberalization of the country's governance and the right of repatriation for exiled compatriots. Habyarimana responded by jailing ten thousand of his domestic opponents (both Tutsi and Hutu) under horrifyingly primitive and often fatal conditions, and setting off a series of diversionary pogroms against outlying Tutsi. It was then that Monique, who had long insisted that such ethnic distinctions swelled to troublesome dimensions among her otherwise pacific countrymen only at the recurrent instigation of venal politicians, threw herself into a struggle grounded in individual human rights—as opposed to, and transcending, group rights. She founded a series of monitoring groups and regularly tabulated the extent of the regime's depredations; when, for example, in early 1992, she heard of a developing massacre outside Kigali she rushed to the site and then back to the capital, where she shamed a group of diplomats into returning with her to the scene. (Their presence probably saved scores of lives.) In the following months, she displayed ingenuity in forging alliances among human-rights proponents both in her own country and throughout the region, and also in getting American and European organizations to coördinate their efforts at intervention. These efforts fuelled the ire of the Habyarimana regime against her, and Monique became the target of ever-increasing intimidation.

By the end of 1992, she had brought about the visit of an international commission of human-rights monitors. A week before the delegation arrived, however, a taxi-driver picked up Monique and, in a suspicious incident, proceeded to slam the passenger side of his speeding vehicle into a tree. She was thrown through the windshield, and her face was severely lacerated. But she survived, and a week later, swathed in bandages and still in obvious pain, she was at the airport in Kigali to greet the commission. She handled the logistics for the group throughout the two weeks of their investigation. At the end of the visit, when the delegates were boarding a plane to leave, they noticed that Monique was being pulled aside by a military officer, a man who, the delegates say, was notorious as the regime's chief torturer. Once they got to Europe, they called her to ask what he had wanted. "Oh, he just said that if he sees his name in your report he's going to have me killed," she told them nonchalantly. Alarmed, they asked what they ought to do. "Why, print it, of course," Monique replied, without a moment's hesitation. And they did.

Her work continued, and so did the death threats. The more tenuous Habyarimana's grip on power became, the more vigorously he endeavored to stir up ethnic prejudices and animosities toward specific scapegoats. After Monique's return from America in January, she received more threats than ever. A month ago, a regime-affiliated radio station in Kigali regularly began playing a love song about a girl named Monique, and each time the disk jockey cut in and noted that Rwanda had another Monique and she was a different sort altogether, that she had been defaming the country and didn't deserve to live. Monique is a well-known figure in Kigali and, because of the scars on her face, is easily recognizable.

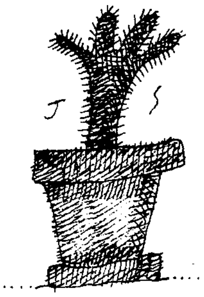
Monique Mujawamariya, photographed by Richard Avedon in New York City, December 7, 1993.

As the situation in Rwanda continued to deteriorate, Monique provided her collaborators abroad with frequent reports. On March 26th, she faxed H.R.W. in New York the news that the regime was distributing huge quantities of firearms to its paramilitary "militia"—gangs of thugs that Habyarimana had been deploying to carry out acts of violence ever since international monitoring had begun thwarting his traditional recourse to more official organs of power. (Until recently, the militia had been armed only with machetes.) She spoke with dread of the coming weeks, but still refused to consider leaving, even though large numbers of people were now abandoning the capital. (She did send her three children out of the city to stay with a European friend.) On April 3rd, Monique says, she received her most chilling death threat yet, from her former best friend, the wife of a senior military man, who recited to her, in lurid detail, all the tortures awaiting her—torments so terrible that she assured Monique she would end up taking her own life, which, the caller said, would be best for everyone. By Wednesday, April 6th, even Monique was beginning to think that it might be best to leave for a while, but she stayed for one more meeting of her human-rights organization. That is why she was in town, and at home, that evening when the Presidential plane went down.

Just who shot down the plane bearing Habyarimana and also the new President of neighboring Burundi remains a mystery. The Rwandan Army blames the R.P.F., but no R.P.F. forces were known to be in the vicinity; in any event, the Presidential Guard quickly sealed off the site and prevented U.N. forces from inspecting the wreckage. There has been speculation that Habyarimana was assassinated by rivals in his own regime who were upset either with the way he seemed to be dragging the country back into war or, alternatively, with the possibility that he might finally be moving to implement a peace settlement agreed to last August. (The two Presidents had been returning from a conference, brokered by Tanzania, about their internal conflicts.) At any rate, Monique immediately foresaw the consequences of the disaster, both for her country and for herself.

Monique's own neighborhood had now almost completely emptied out. She had no car, and was suffering from a foot inflammation that left her unable to walk. She called the Canadian general in charge of the United Nations forces that had been billeted in the capital since last year—twenty-five hundred soldiers—and she called people she knew in various embassies, but all those she got in touch with said, perhaps understandably, that they were too busy to send anyone out to get her. At 10:30 P.M., she managed to get a long-distance call through to her friend and colleague Dr. Alison Des Forges, a Buffalo-based historian of Africa, who has been serving as H.R.W.'s principal point person on Rwanda. (She was on the international commission.) Monique gave Alison an update on human-rights developments and, incidentally, on her own situation. Alison urged her to seek shelter at a Jesuit compound about half a mile from her house, but Monique explained that because of her foot she couldn't even walk there. Alison then telephoned colleagues at H.R.W. and elsewhere, and they began pulling out all the stops, trying to get someone to order someone to rescue Monique—but to no avail. Kigali was descending into chaos.

At 4 A.M. Buffalo time on April 7th—ten in the morning in Kigali—Alison received another call from Monique. It appeared that the members of Habyarimana's Presidential Guard were on a rampage, targeting all the dead leader's perceived opponents—whether Tutsi or Hutu—and they were now pouring into her neighborhood. She could hear gunfire all around. Alison and Monique endeavored to maintain hourly contact after that, and Alison's call at five o'clock found Monique huddled in a corner: members of the Presidential Guard were now methodically ransacking the neighborhood. A few minutes earlier, she had seen them escort three terrified people (one of them a colleague of hers) out of a house two doors away from her own, and execute them at a nearby intersection, where their bodies still lay. The soldiers had then left, but who knew if they would be back?



"We continued desperately trying to reach someone who could pressure the U.N. into sending a personnel carrier over to retrieve her," Alison told me later that day. "But still to no avail. At 6 A.M., when I reached Monique again, she whispered that the soldiers had returned and were now in the house next door, and that they were just then dragging a boy out. I myself was able to hear a rifle shot, and Monique confirmed that the boy had been killed. While we were still talking to each other—it was about six-twenty my time now—she exclaimed, 'They're here! They're coming in!' I urged her to tell them that she was talking to the White House, and to have them talk to me; I urged her to open the door herself, to let them in, to offer them jewelry, money—anything. 'Oh, my God,' she said, interrupting me. 'Please take care of my children. I don't want you to hear this.' And she hung up."

Alison was silent for a few moments. "By coincidence, two of my Belgian colleagues phoned her during the next few minutes. The first got Monique. Then a man took the phone, said hello, and hung up. The second got a man who, hearing the foreign voice, immediately hung up. After that, we kept trying to reach her, but we only got a busy signal."

As of that afternoon, Alison and the people at H.R.W. had almost given up hope that Monique had survived, and they seemed devastated. Monique's boundless energy and unquenchable good cheer had made a singular impression on her colleagues during her New York visit. When one of them asked her at that time how she managed to retain her spirits amid such desolation, she'd replied with an old Rwandan proverb: "Either you float with the foam or you sink in the beer." By Friday morning, papers throughout the world (including the *Times* and the Washington *Post*) were reporting that Monique had in all likelihood been killed.

But Alison hadn't given up. All through Thursday, she had kept calling—the line seemed to have gone dead. But then, at 11 P.M. her time, she got through. The man who picked up the phone this time turned out to be Monique's gardener, and he said that she had somehow managed to escape through her back door as the troops barged in and had hidden out in the bushes of her back garden for the rest of that day. After the soldiers left, that evening, she had crawled back into her house and hidden in its rafters. It took her a while to struggle down and speak to Alison, who now told her to stay put—that she would do what she could to rescue her.

Once again, H.R.W. set about trying to find someone who could go get Monique, but with no better luck. Reports of near-indiscriminate slaughter were flooding the airwaves: the Jesuit compound that Alison had tried to direct Monique to had been raided, and almost all the Africans there had been butchered. U.N. forces had themselves come under fire: ten Belgian soldiers were killed trying to defend the Rwandan Prime Minister, a well-known moderate, and she, too, was killed. Bodies were piling up by the hundred and then by the thousand.

The phone lines to Monique's neighborhood once more fell silent, this time permanently. Several days went by with no further word of Monique, and again there was a growing sense that there would never be any word. Alison reached a priest in Kigali—a European who had run a modest democratic opposition journal—and as she ticked off the names of those she was most concerned about he said, "Stop, stop, they're dead, all dead." Monique's situation—considering her easily identifiable facial scars and her limp—seemed particularly hopeless.

But then, suddenly, on Monday morning, H.R.W. received word from someone at the U.N. that Monique had been rescued and was on a plane, bound for Europe. The organization broke into an exultant celebration, the like of which few of its members could recall. But just as suddenly, six hours later, the same person called back to confess: "Wrong name. Somebody different. We don't have any word on your person."

In some ways, this was the lowest moment of all for Alison and the rest of Monique's friends, at H.R.W. and abroad. The R.P.F. was marching on the capital and a horrendous battle appeared imminent. Hope gave way once more to anxiety.

EARLY the next morning—Tuesday, again at 4 A.M.—Alison's phone rang. "Alison, I feel terrible." It was Monique, apologizing. "I'm always waking you up like this." She had somehow made it to a hotel in downtown Kigali and was momentarily safe, though the slaughter outside continued. Monique recounted how for three days and nights she had remained hidden in the rafters of her house, with soldiers coming in and out, rummaging around, shooting up the neighborhood. Finally, just a few hours earlier, when she realized that a few soldiers who were encamped in her back yard were starting to dismantle her fence for firewood—and who knew what they intended to torch next?—she decided to venture down. Seeing that the soldiers seemed quite young and were possibly inexperienced, she sneaked into her bedroom, pulled out an old photograph album, took out a wedding picture of herself with her officer husband, and went out into the back yard. She showed the young soldiers the picture, told them that her husband was an important officer who was away at the front, and asked them to take her to a hotel in the city center. The boys discussed the situation among themselves warily—though they didn't seem to recognize her—and then one offered to grant her request in exchange for a hundred thousand Rwandan francs (about seven hundred dollars). She went back into the house, where she had an emergency stash, got the necessary amount, gathered up some of her other possessions, and came back out. The boy loaded her into a jeep and headed downtown. He stopped after a few moments to rob her of all the rest of her possessions, but then, a true gentleman, went on to the hotel. "And, oh, Alison," Monique now said plaintively. "He took your grandmother's brooch, too!" (She was referring to an antique brooch—a legacy from Alison's Czech grandmother—that Alison had given her just before the meeting at the White House, so that she could secure her elegant ceremonial Rwandan gown. After the meeting, Alison had insisted that Monique keep it.)

Once again, Alison and H.R.W. kicked into high gear. They received assurances from the Canadians, the Belgians, and the U.N. that if Monique showed up at the evacuation site she would be allowed to leave, but, they were told, nobody could possibly get to the hotel to bring her there. And with the battle for Kigali now beginning in earnest, spirits in New York once again began to sag.

Early the next day, Wednesday, April 13th, Alison's phone rang: it was Monique, and this time her voice was much clearer. She was calling from Brussels, where she had just arrived, on one of the last evacuation transports out of Kigali. She had yet another astonishing story of bluster and scary improvisation to tell—this one involving a Canadian cleric; a Hutu businessman and his car; a final checkpoint manned with drunken young soldiers who let the car through only because it happened to be being driven by the priest, who had once worked in their home region; a moment's hesitation at the evacuation point; and then, to her great relief, her name showing up on the list of those few Rwandans with permission to join the evacuation. H.R.W.'s exertions had paid off after all.

When I reached her the next morning, Monique sounded rested, ebullient, thankful, and, at the same time, filled with a sense of urgency. She had already launched into a tight schedule of meetings with international officials, trying to press the cause of her ravaged homeland, and she said she was planning to come to New York in a few days so that she could further press that cause at the U.N. She said that what she had witnessed during the previous week was "horrible beyond words," but that it was not random or spontaneous or the inevitable product of age-old animosities. The vast majority of her countrymen were perfectly capable of getting along with one another. No, this horror had resulted from the premeditated policy of a dictatorial regime: "The vast majority of the slaughter in Rwanda this week was perpetrated by small bands of young men who'd been systematically transformed by the regime into killing machines"—*machines à tuer*—"and then unleashed upon the population." Now, she said, the great task was "to prevent the R.P.F. from succumbing to the terrible temptations of vengeance." As for the future, she concluded, the way to prevent such carnage before it even begins is to force regimes to honor human rights in the first place. ♦

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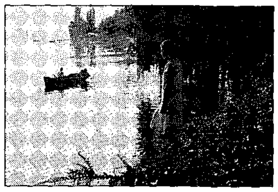

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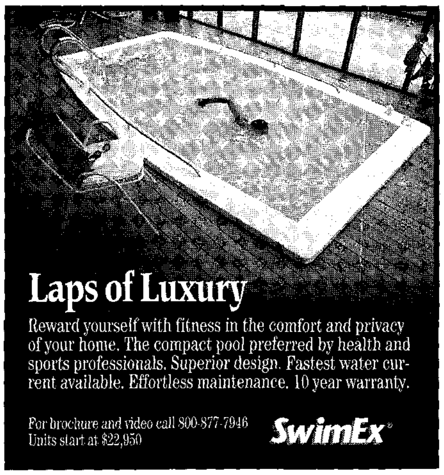

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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

SCREENING POLLOCK

Suddenly, everyone wants to make a movie about Jackson Pollock, which means that Hollywood has joined the forty-year war over the artist's memory.

BY ARTHUR LUBOW

HAVING shucked off my shoes and put on foam-rubber slippers, I was standing on the paint-smeared wooden floor of Jackson Pollock's studio, with my guide, Helen A. Harrison, who is the director of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center, in the Springs section of East Hampton. To create his "drip paintings," Pollock laid his canvases on this very floor, and the splashes of color that missed their target provide a palimpsest of the Pollock artistic process. Pointing to one cluster of markings, Harrison explained, "There are the slashing ones and the meandering ones. This area's especially rich—it's really quite lively. The ultramarine blue is from 'Blue Poles.' And this patch over here"—she indicated a vivid splotch of red and yellow—"is 'Convergence.' " She led me across the studio. "And there are the footprints," she said. "These are rather nice. He seems to have walked over 'Blue Poles,' because they're on the diagonal." The streaks and gobs of color are precisely what was left out of the pictures. Examining the haphazard web of paint, which, despite its superficial resemblance to Pollock's paintings, has a significance that is solely biographical, I felt the tug of interest in an artist's life which has little or nothing to do with his art.

I was in East Hampton to investigate why, almost forty years after Pollock's death, several groups of people were eager to make a movie about his life. The Long Island community was titillated by the reported interest of stars—Barbra Streisand, Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, Al Pacino—but those spangled names were only loosely tied to Pollock. The storm of movie publicity had generated a St. Elmo's fire, and you had to look beyond it, behind the press-agentry and deal-making, to see that a war over Pollock's memory had been going on at least since his death, and that the movie rivalry had simply moved it to another battlefield. Something about Pollock inspires feelings of surprising intensity, which cause people to guard their individual images of him and damn all others as counterfeits. And, for some reason, the images of Pollock vary so widely that it is hard to believe one man is their model. The biographical muddle brings to mind all the middlebrow critics of abstract art, and especially Pollock's art, who argue that there's nothing substantial on the canvas—that it's all in the mind of the beholder. Reviewing the great November, 1950, show of Pollock drip paintings at the Betty Parsons Gallery, for instance, Howard Devree wrote in the *Times* that "its content . . . is almost negligible—that what one gets out of it one must first put there." A mountain of dissertations and monographs has built up since then to discredit this notion of Pollock's art, and to show that the paintings are not unstructured and formless, but do indeed have "content." Instead, what turns out to have been unstructured and formless is Pollock's life. Here Devree's words apply: What one gets out of it one must first put there.

Its broad contours are not in dispute. Born in 1912 in Cody, Wyoming, Pollock grew up in Arizona and California. His father was a farmer and laborer, his mother a homemaker with an insatiable ambition for new and better homes. Following the lead of his eldest brother, Jackson studied art in Los Angeles and in 1930 moved to New York to train with the regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton. During the Depression, he painted for the Works Progress Administration and fraternized with left-wing artists, among them David Siqueiros. Like so many other artists, he was deeply influenced by Picasso, and in the late thirties his work became increasingly abstract.

The support of the wealthy collector Peggy Guggenheim and the combative critic Clement Greenberg helped to propel Pollock into prominence in the forties. The key backer, however, was the strong-willed Brooklyn-born artist Lee Krasner, whom he met in 1941 and married in 1945. Pollock and Krasner moved immediately after their wedding (the move is what precipitated the wedding) to Springs, where they had bought the simple farmhouse that is now a museum. Here Pollock developed the drip technique for which he is best known, and created his greatest paintings, winning the respect of other artists and, in the wider world, a blend of fame and notoriety. Although he drank heavily throughout his life, by the mid-fifties he was only drinking. In the summer of 1956, Krasner escaped from her husband, who had been abusing her and romancing another woman, and travelled to France. A month later, Pollock drove his car off the road at high speed and was killed instantly. He was forty-four. After his death, the Pollock legend, which had sprouted in a cramped, restricted way during his lifetime, expanded luxuriantly. It shows no signs of wilting.

What is one to make of this material? The biographer of a dead subject must practice a kind of echolocation, tallying the recollections of different witnesses to compose a coherent image. A Pollock biographer can be driven batty by the conflicting testimony, which prevents an outline from forming. Even so, six books have been written about Pollock's life, three of which have inspired the movie talk. Jeffrey Potter, who first met Pollock in 1949, compiled an oral biography in 1985, splicing together interviews he conducted with the artist's friends. His book, "To a Violent Grave," has been optioned by Streisand and De Niro. Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith wrote "Jackson Pollock: An American Saga," a mammoth book that was a Pulitzer Prize winner for 1990 and a best-seller. It was optioned by James Trezza, a Florida art dealer, and Ed Harris has agreed to play Pollock in that movie. Then there is "Love Affair," a memoir published in 1974 by Ruth Kligman, who was Pollock's lover at the end and was injured in the car crash that took his life and the life of her friend Edith Metzger. The director Harold Becker tried to obtain the rights to "Love Affair" for a film that would star Pacino, but the negotiations broke down in August, and Kligman's agent is talking to other producers.

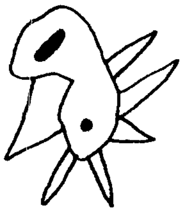
Pollock photographed in his Springs studio by Hans Namuth in 1950.

HANS NAMUTH

There is very little fraternal bonhomie among these writers. They bicker—not about rarefied Senior Common Room topics like Siqueiros's primacy as a drip painter or the influence of the French Surrealists on Abstract Expressionism but about such grittier matters as Pollock's sexual orientation, urinary habits, barroom behavior, and erectile capacity. And their squabbling can get ugly. Naifeh and Smith sued Potter for improper interference with business relations after he threatened to sue them for copyright infringement. Naifeh says that Potter is motivated by envy, because "he planned to go down in history as *the* biographer of Jackson Pollock." Potter says that Naifeh is "evil on every level" and that Kligman is "pathetic." Naifeh characterizes Kligman's book as "a likable romantic marshmallow" and Smith calls it "a cliché." Kligman found Potter's book a "cop-out" and unreadable (although she did get through a number of comments on herself, and disliked them). The Naifeh-Smith book infuriated her. She labels it "defamation."

Before venturing into the maelstrom, I paid a call on B. H. Friedman, who in 1972 published the first biography, "Jackson Pollock: Energy Made Visible." That book was optioned in 1990, but the option has lapsed, and Friedman, while far from disinterested, is not involved in the movie rivalry. (The two other Pollock biographies, by Ellen G. Landau and Deborah Solomon, have aroused no passions that I can detect.) Friedman regaled me with firsthand stories of the war over Pollock's image. The idea of writing a biography was brought to him by Lee Krasner, in 1968, but once he had finished the book she had her lawyer try to suppress it. He was amazed. He shouldn't have been. His biography challenged Krasner's position as the ultimate court of appeal on all matters pertaining to Pollock's life. For instance, Friedman quoted from a published interview in which Krasner said, "It is a myth that he wasn't verbal. He could be hideously verbal when he wanted to be. Ask the people he really talked to: Tony Smith and me." But instead of stopping there, the biographer did ask Tony Smith, a sculptor and a close friend of Pollock's, and Smith said no, Pollock was not at all verbal. Krasner, having managed Pollock's career during his lifetime and the dispersal of his paintings after his death, realized belatedly that even a friendly biographer could not be trusted to present Pollock exactly as she saw him. She was a forceful woman. Except for Kligman's memoir, which was a direct affront, no further Pollock biographies were published until after Krasner's death, in 1984.

Friedman is urbane and soft-spoken. Now sixty-seven, he divides his time between an apartment looking out on the East River and an elegant modern house on Georgica Pond in East Hampton. When he met Pollock, in 1955, he was working for the Uris real-estate empire, which his mother's family owned, and was writing in his spare time. He told me that his friendship with Pollock, although it lasted less than a year and a half, was "one of the most profound relationships" of his life. "I was in business when I met him, and I began thinking seriously about leaving business, which I did a few years later," he said. "I had been impressed by an enormously liberated image, a tremendous freedom, in his work. He represented a life I'd never had. Here was a man who was taking big chances. He was living on the outer edge of the wheel." By the time Friedman met him, unfortunately, Pollock was drinking, not painting, and a colder eye might have seen him as having fallen under the wheel. (Paul Brach, an East Hampton painter who knew both men, told me, "Jack for B. H. Friedman was the image of an unfettered artist, although a more fettered man I have never known.") Being with Pollock could be a trial. In writing about him, the challenge for Friedman and all later biographers was to explain what went wrong, to account for his deterioration.



The most productive—and most sober—two years of Pollock's life ended dramatically at Thanksgiving time in 1950, during a dinner party at his house. In a scene that will surely be included in any Hollywood movie, the artist poured himself several glasses of bourbon, grew more and more belligerent, and then overturned the heavily laden table. The timing of this outburst seems significant. Immediately beforehand, he had finished a demonstration of his painting technique for a film by the photographer Hans Namuth. (Namuth's brief color documentary and his earlier, shorter black-and-white one are still the only Pollock movies.) The Namuth film was another crest in a rolling sea of hype—including, most notably, an article in *Life* on August 8, 1949, which asked in a headline, "Jackson Pollock: Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?" Friedman believes that as avant-garde painters were gilded into celebrities and the art world became a business Pollock's spontaneity seeped out of him. Starring in a film, Friedman wrote, was for Pollock "the final reduction of himself to subject matter, to becoming a thing, a commodity, an entertainment." In short, Pollock's tragic fate was to be sucked into the commercial world that he had shown Friedman the way out of.

In looking into Pollock, Friedman (who named his son Jackson) saw the motifs of his own life staring back at him. He told me that he thinks Pollock had a comparably profound effect on Jeffrey Potter. The two men have been friends for forty years. When the Potters and the Friedmans get together, the wives have a standing ultimatum: There will be no talk of Jackson Pollock.

BECAUSE Jeffrey Potter is blind in one eye and color-blind in the other, the images that helped to unbutton Friedman barely penetrated his field of vision. Long before Potter appreciated the paintings, he thought of writing about Pollock as an insecure, uneducated victim—which, as it happens, is very much the way Potter viewed himself. When he first met the artist, in early 1949, Potter was starting a construction business and scouting out Stony Hill Farm, a hundred-acre property in East Hampton, which he eventually bought, for thirty thousand dollars. (His children, who inherited the property after the death of Potter's first wife, recently placed the house and five of the acres on the market for two million eight hundred thousand dollars.) Far less rich than his patrician mien and cadences suggest, Potter still lives in East Hampton, but when I visited him last fall, he and his wife, Priscilla, were sojourning in a Nova Scotia hamlet that, in its poverty and windswept, bleak beauty, reminds him of how East Hampton used to be.

A Groton dropout ("There has been a Potter at Groton School since the original board of trustees," he said), Potter had ambitions to be a writer, but he never talked of that with Pollock. Their subjects were heavy machinery, local gossip, and Pollock's mystical, semi-coherent philosophy. "He had a real problem with communication," Potter told me. "His lines were so sparse and slow when said that it seemed painful. A lot of it—I can certainly sympathize, being a dropout myself from high school—was a sense of inferiority around educated people." The lack of a diploma was just the start of Potter's identification with Pollock. "Pollock and I had so much in common, not in terms of talent but in neurotic terms," he said. "Each of us was the youngest of five children, with a failed father and a strong mother. We had in common being outsiders, feeling victimized. Also, we both relied on our intuition, because we hadn't had the training—he as a painter and I as a writer. In basic structure of personality, I think we were reflections of each other."

Potter began jotting down impressions of Pollock for a novel to be called "The Outsider," but he never wrote it. In the mid-seventies, he started a memoir, identifying Pollock in his notes as "JP1" and himself as "JP2." He found an editor, and the editor suggested that he expand the memoir into a full-scale biography; after he submitted a partial manuscript, however, the editor asked him to convert his interview transcripts into an oral biography. "I was horrified by this, because I thought I was doing a major opus, but I didn't want to return the advance," Potter told me. He reduced his own writing to an interstitial commentary. Because of the book's format, Potter's view of Pollock is just one thread in the strand. The multilayered presentation accords with his over-all image of the artist. "During his lifetime, people saw him very differently, perhaps in terms of how they saw themselves, as I did," Potter said. "He acted like a sponge with people in their talk. Whatever their special interests were, he would adopt them. After three meetings with me, he was talking as if he was an expert on diesel engines. What he wanted was to get next to people, escaping from his loneliness." Like Friedman, Potter believes that celebrity undid Pollock, but his explanation is shaded by his own preoccupations. "With fame, he lost his claim on people," Potter said. "You cannot be an orphan and a hero together."

Guilt is at the root of Potter's Pollock obsession. "The last year of his life, I had to avoid him, because of the transfusion that went on," he told me. "He would spend an hour with me and he would leave a new man, and I would be drained." On the morning of what would be Pollock's last day, Potter lent him a building jack, and they quarrelled as they strained to lift the piece of equipment into the trunk of Pollock's car, an Oldsmobile convertible. When Potter heard of the car crash, he was certain that the heavy jack (even the name now seemed portentous to him) had upset the vehicle's balance and caused Pollock to lose control. Implausible as that was, the jack symbolized Potter's vague guilt at having failed to meet Pollock's demands on him, and an uneasy confusion about why he had allowed himself to be drawn into such an intense relationship in the first place.

One needs this background to understand the feud that derailed Naifeh and Smith's first film sale and preoccupied Potter for almost two years. While Naifeh and Smith were working on their book, they offered Potter seven hundred and fifty dollars and an effusive acknowledgment for permission to reprint quotations from his book. After he refused, they used many of the quotes anyway, saying that they had called up his sources and elicited similar remarks. In 1989, their agent auctioned the movie rights to their biography for an astounding hundred-thousand-dollar option fee; if a movie was made, the total figure was to be seven hundred thousand dollars. The paperwork arrived on the producer's desk at about the same time as a letter from Potter's lawyer threatening a suit for copyright infringement. The producer never signed the papers. Naifeh and Smith then initiated a countersuit, which cost Potter sixty thousand dollars—a sum he could ill afford. In August, 1991, shortly after their book won the Pulitzer Prize, Naifeh and Smith dropped the litigation, receiving from Potter a promise to stop accusing them of plagiarism. They say they realized that their suit was futile once private investigators had determined that Potter lacked the money to pay them anything. Potter maintains that they backed off in fear of the evidence he planned to produce.

Anyway, what was being contested was tangential to the real dispute. "I don't think I would have gone to court for plagiarism if it had been only a matter of plagiarism," Potter told me. He loathed the book by Naifeh and Smith, he said, because he hated their image of Pollock as an abusive, belligerent drunk with repressed homosexual tendencies. His objection to their view of Pollock's sexual orientation is ironic, because Potter, in his own book, took the lead in raising this subject. "It was the first question Jeffrey asked of me: 'Do you think Pollock was gay?' " Friedman recalled. However, Potter (and Friedman as well) concluded that Pollock wasn't. Potter says that he addressed the matter because he wondered about the "feeling of huge tension" that frequently permeated his meetings with the artist. "That was one of the reasons I got into asking questions about homosexual encounters with Pollock, wondering if there could have been that link between us," he said. "I didn't see it, now or then. I was not attracted to him physically. There are some men with whom it would have been a possibility, but not with Pollock."

Potter's search for Pollock started him down a path that invariably led back to Potter. No wonder, then, that he takes the Naifeh-Smith book so personally. "It was much more than feeling ripped off," he said. "It was a sense of being violated, as they had violated Pollock. If he is the mirror cracked, then so am I." Potter complains that the current commotion over a Pollock movie distracts him, at the age of seventy-five, from the work he wishes to complete—two novels and an autobiography. "It's funny that my waiting for something to happen with the movie is getting in the way of my writing almost as much as my guilt about Pollock did earlier," he said. "I thought writing about Pollock would get him off my back." In a way, he is still writing about Pollock: he has structured his autobiography, which he calls "Under Oath," around his answers to broad questions posed in deposition by the lawyers for Naifeh and Smith. The edges between JP1 and JP2 are very blurry. When I inquired whether Potter would be better off if he had never met Pollock, he thought about it for a moment, then said, "If I were asked, would I want to go through the whole Pollock experience from first knowing him right up to this moment, I'd have to say no. I'd be a freer man if I hadn't got stuck with him."

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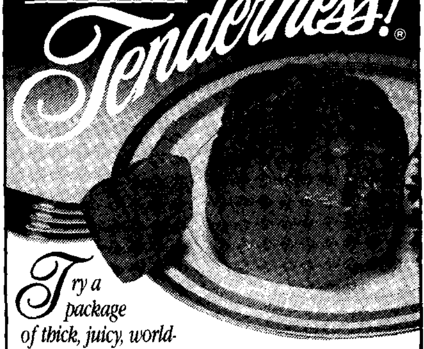
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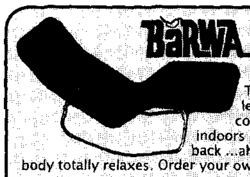
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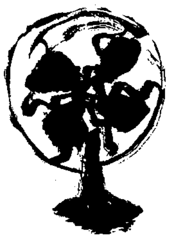
Steven Naifeh and Greg Smith share in Aiken, South Carolina. The house was built in the eighteen-nineties as a Whitney winter cottage, and Smith compares the ongoing restoration project, in its gargantuan scope and unforeseen complications, to the process of writing the Pollock biography. He showed me a picture of the house in a book about the Whitneys, and, with appropriate awe, I remarked that the caption referred to fifty rooms. "I don't know where they got that number," he said. "There are *sixty* rooms." Some of those rooms are occupied by five employees of Naifeh and Smith, who work full time at making phone calls to further the two men's primary enterprise, which is the publication of biennial guides to "the best lawyers" and "the best doctors" in America. The Naifeh-Smith literature is itself a mansion of many chambers. Soon after the two men met, in the mid-seventies, as students at Harvard Law School, they collaborated on "Moving Up in Style," which Naifeh calls "a guide for yuppies before there were yuppies." That book's success (they say that it financed a year's education for each of them) led to more books. Some, like "Why Can't Men Open Up?" and "How to Make Love to a Woman," are strictly commercial ventures, and others fall into the true-crime genre. Naifeh and Smith place the Pollock book on a pedestal of its own. They wrote it for love, not money. (A twenty-five-thousand-dollar advance, they say, did little to defray their writing expenses, which came to a hundred thousand dollars.) They are very proud of it, and the criticisms lobbed at it by Pollock friends and Pollock scholars exasperate them.



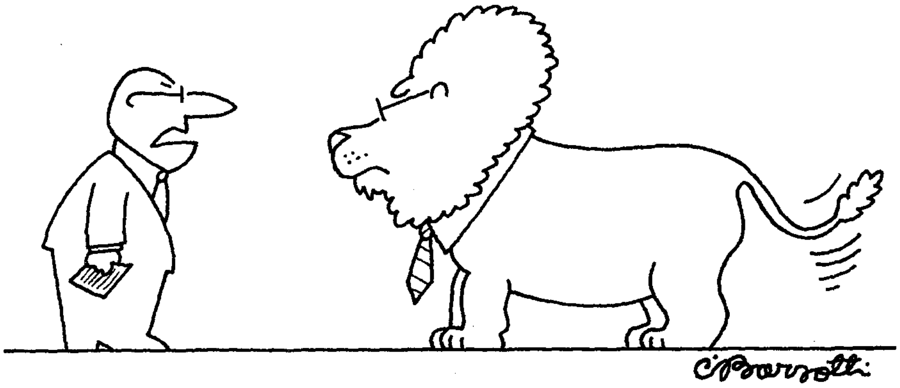
As even their detractors usually concede, Naifeh and Smith unearthed prodigious amounts of new information about Pollock's life. What makes the book controversial is how they used this material. In unflagging detail, they portray Pollock as every hostess's nightmare: overturning a lobster stew, deliberately driving through a lattice fence, grabbing women's breasts, pissing in a fireplace, igniting a mattress and then pissing to put out the flames, pissing in a potted plant, pissing in another potted plant, pissing— Well, there is a lot of pissing, and it is marshalled to make, if not a point, at least a pattern. Curiously, just as with the talk of homosexuality, the urinary line took off from a passage in Potter's book—this time a recollection by Patsy Southgate, a neighbor of Pollock's. Pollock once told Southgate that he was inspired to lay his canvas on the floor by a boyhood memory of his father urinating out West on a flat rock. For Potter, that merited four sentences, but for Naifeh and Smith it became a recurring theme, in which pissing was for Pollock "the ultimate assertion of masculinity." The arabesques of the drip paintings, they imply, recapitulated the urinous spray. Naifeh (who usually does the reporting, while Smith writes) told me he was mystified by the critics' emphasis on this bio-urinalysis, because it takes up a tiny proportion of the book. "We devote one-hundredth of the space to this subject that we do to Jackson's relationship with the art of Picasso," he said.

Although that's hyperbole, there *is* a huge amount of stuff in the book—on Pollock's artistic influences and training, for example—which the detractors ignore as mere stuffing. Yet it's also true that what stays with the reader is the graphic accounts of Pollock's misbehavior and the baroque speculation about his homosexual impulses. Naifeh became testy when I suggested that his book emphasizes Pollock's loutishness. "We had four hundred incidents of drunken brawls, and you couldn't use all of them without boring the reader to the point of idiocy," he said. "But the *whole* little notebook with charming incidents found its way into the book." He compared the "denial" among Pollock's old friends who dislike the book to the behavior of "the wife of an alcoholic, who is willing to put up with enormous amounts of abuse to remember the good moments."

I had a hunch that the notion of Pollock as a repressed homosexual was what had drawn Naifeh and Smith into their eight-year project, but they said that when they began the research they had no inkling that Pollock's sexual identity would be an issue. (Potter's book had not yet been published.) They concede, however, that their own homosexuality affected their view of Pollock. Naifeh feels that "we were the recipients of a certain amount of forthright discussion of this issue because people were aware of our situation" and felt comfortable sharing their own suspicions about Pollock's sexuality. The judgment call for a biographer is what to believe, and, beyond that, what to include. The Naifeh-Smith book includes, among other factually questionable things, a couple of ominous scenes, one in Greenwich Village and one in Springs, of a band of men emerging from the shadows to spirit away Pollock for (it is strongly implied) a habitual session of rough sex. The scenario is so unlikely and the sourcing so tenuous that its main effect on me was as a reminder that, although Naifeh and Smith never met Pollock, they have developed a personal vision of him that rivals Potter's and Friedman's in its intensity. Their Pollock is a "borderline schizophrenic," whose ambivalent passion for his mother and hopeless love for his absent father resulted in repressed homosexual impulses and feverish self-loathing. When Naifeh and Smith attack their detractors as "homophobic," they are not simply being defensive about their own work and their own lives. They are appalled that their critics act as if, in Smith's words, "we'd accused Jackson of some crime." They seem angry on behalf of their Pollock, outraged that a man they regard as a genius should have been viewed with disgust, by others and by himself, for being sexually attracted to men.

None of this would ever find its way into a Hollywood movie. At this point, Naifeh and Smith appear relaxed about their cinematic prospects. The money has dwindled (Trezza has so far paid them twenty thousand dollars in option fees, a fraction of what they say they were offered before Potter stepped in), and so has their excitement. "I reach down inside and I can't find any reason why the movie is important to me," Smith said. "It's not part of the ongoing saga of my life and my career." He and Naifeh are already thinking about their next "serious" art book, a biography of Vincent van Gogh. If that comes off, they contemplate writing biographies of two other artists, Andy Warhol and Pablo Picasso. "You rearrange those books on the shelf and you've got the whole spectrum of modern art," Smith said. "The idea we have is to do for those periods and those artists what we did for Abstract Expressionists and Pollock."

VAN GOGH was Ruth Kligman's hero before she met Pollock. She is attracted to heroes. In her memoir,



"And stop swishing your tail when I'm talking to you."

she writes of Pollock, "He was my hero; as other girls adored Brando or Elvis Presley, I adored Pollock." When she was growing up in Newark, going to the movies was her great pleasure, and a whiff of old popcorn rises from her book. She records that in drinking with her friend Edith Metzger she was reminded of Joan Crawford and Ava Gardner, and that on a date with a young man she thought of Gene Kelly and Rita Hayworth. After the car crash, she writes, "I felt separated from myself, some very pathetic girl being taken to the hospital and I was watching her as in a movie." She told Naifeh and Smith that she thought of herself and Pollock as "Brando and Monroe" or "Bacall and Bogart." Reading "Love Affair," I found myself thinking that any movie version of her affair with Pollock would have to be a letdown for Kligman, because the movie unreeled for her while she was living it.

Although she has been trying ever since "Love Affair" was published to have a movie made, Kligman is wary of the prospect. "The movie is going to live longer than me," she said recently. "You turn on the television and you see Gary Cooper or Barbara Stanwyck. They're not alive, but their movies are." The negotiations with Becker and Pacino broke off when she balked at signing over all control of her story. She now thinks her book might better be bought by a female star—not that she can think of a contemporary actress who could play her. "You know how Vivien Leigh was as Scarlett O'Hara?" she said. "Very strong, very feminine, sexual, spunky, vulnerable, and with a mind of her own?"

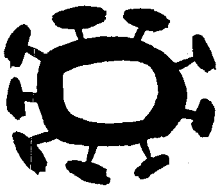
Kligman has lived for more than thirty years in a studio on West Fourteenth Street that was once Franz Kline's. After Pollock died, she had a brief fling with Kline, and then a three-year affair with Willem de Kooning. In a prose-poem that she showed me she writes, "To be remembered is what I always wanted . . . to live forever, live on throughout eternity, give my soul and energy to the world, the best in me, my sweet soul to all who want it, the men in my life, beautiful wondrous special men, geniuses and visionaries." When Kligman met Pollock, in 1956, she was twenty-five, and her dark good looks were sometimes compared to Elizabeth Taylor's. I was a little surprised on our first meeting to find her a redhead, with wavy hair and a kittenish manner that brought to mind Mia Farrow. She was theatrically dressed in a black velvet jacket, a white tuxedo shirt, a black skirt, black tights, and black shoes, with a large silver cross on a string around her neck and various pieces of turquoise jewelry. She had me look at her paintings, which since 1980, when she became a Christian, have featured abstract cruciforms and figurative saints. She has no major Pollocks, and that is a matter of enduring bitterness: the artist promised her a large painting, but after his death she never received it. Instead, she has the famous "last photograph" taken by Edith Metzger of Pollock in a French-sailor striped shirt, his face and body thickened by drink, sitting on a boulder with Kligman and clasping her bare leg. "Isn't it beautiful?" she said, showing me a copy. "It's like I'm sitting in the lap of art history."

That photograph was taken just a few hours before Pollock and Metzger were killed and Kligman was thrown from the convertible. In our first telephone conversation, she told me, "My analyst was saying to me the other day that, aside from being born, my relationship with Jackson was the most dramatic episode of my life." I agreed that, even after all these years, their affair could well be the crucial event of her life. "And of his," she replied. "If he hadn't met me, he might have died a very different kind of death—of cirrhosis of the liver—which would have changed his history. It would also have changed art history. Dying with a woman in the car, and another young woman who died as well, made it glamorous." On another occasion, she told me, "If van Gogh had not cut off his ear and died in an insane asylum, the paintings would have been the same but there would not have been the same mystique."

Kligman knows of her reputation as an art tart—"a very boring, well-stacked girl," Potter called her. She is adamant that her relationships with Pollock and de Kooning be regarded respectfully. "Underestimating me is underestimating Jackson Pollock or Bill de Kooning," she said. "It's saying that Jackson and Bill separate themselves from their heart and sexuality. Geniuses don't do that. They're not just involved with— I don't want to use a vulgar word. Why would someone think that a man is a genius in all ways and then when he's involved with a woman he becomes stupid?"

The Naifeh-Smith biography insulted her on a new level. Not only was she a tart in their telling; she was an ineffectual tart. Naifeh and Smith state that Pollock was so damaged by alcohol toward the end of his life he became impotent, and that he and Kligman made love perhaps once, and possibly not at all. Their cheek flabbergasts her. "I want to go on record as saying that Jackson Pollock was not impotent," she told me. "We had sex a lot. I'll go on the witness stand. How dare they? How dare they cast aspersions on Jackson Pollock and say he was homosexual or impotent? It's not true." The movie that Kligman would like to see made is a romantic, "epic" story about a charming, brilliant, heroic older painter and a wide-eyed, beautiful, adoring young woman. As she understands it, Pollock tired of living once he realized that he couldn't escape from his dependence on Krasner. "It was a kind of ballet," she said. "We both had precognition. By dying that way, he was choosing a form of suicide rather than live a phony life. I think he had that Romeo and Juliet idea, and my bringing Edith along upset the plan. It's haunted me all these years, that I brought her."

By derailing the Becker-Pacino deal, which she says could have earned her two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, Kligman indicated that her chief interest in a movie is not financial. "The reason I want the film is to show my authenticity," she said. "He's the hero and I'm the heroine. To be treated as less than that is disrespect. It's like Jacqueline Kennedy is in the car with Kennedy and then she marries Onassis. That's the closest thing in modern history to my going from Jackson to Bill. Bill was very intrigued with the fact that I was involved with Jackson. All my life, men have wanted to be close to me because I was close to this pinnacle of greatness, and he loved me. If a movie could be made and the director and an actor took it seriously—Jackson loved this girl, and that is one of the reasons he became a big hero—then I could give it up." And does she want to give it up? "I think it's very important for me to let go of it," she said, in words that reminded me of Potter's. "I would love to be free of it more than anything."

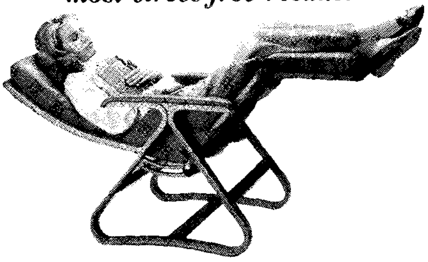


For a clue to what Hollywood might make of Pollock, I thought it would be helpful to look at what happened to van Gogh. "Lust for Life," Vincente Minnelli's film version of Irving Stone's novel, was released in the year of Pollock's death. It's a real fifties movie, and not just thanks to its star, Kirk Douglas, who looks every bit as sharp-edged as the Seagram Building. "Lust for Life" presents van Gogh the way Pollock projected himself—as an authentic person in a world of phonies. The first thing you learn in the film is that van Gogh has a religious vocation and it is squelched by the hypocrisy of the Church. He takes up painting as a means of expressing what he feels; one of his doctors says, "Painting is beneficial, perhaps even necessary, for this patient's well-being." He takes up drinking because, even with art as a pressure vent, his feelings overwhelm him. "When the storm inside me gets too loud," he says, "I take a glass too much to distract me." This is the heroic view of the artist who is too sensitive and too pure to survive. I appreciated how old-fashioned it is when I fast-forwarded to "Vincent and Theo," Robert Altman's 1990 movie, and found myself in the familiar contemporary world of needy alcoholics and their co-dependent care partners. For Altman, the syphilitic Theo is at least as interesting as the paint-eating, impotent Vincent. The major issue to be examined here is: Why did Theo subordinate career, wife, and child to his crazy brother?

Even without Streisand's involvement, any movie about Pollock that is made in the nineteen-nineties will be, to some degree, "Jackson and Lee." Cis Corman, the president of Streisand's production company, confirmed to me that in their picture Krasner would get equal billing with Pollock. For his part, Trezza told me that, while his movie would be "not just about an artist and not just a love story" (it would be "about the whole time"), Krasner would nonetheless play a huge role in it. Her moment may have come. In the Namuth documentary, she appears unidentified for a few seconds, seen from behind, gazing at Pollock's paintings. Back in the fifties, no one paid much mind to the wife mixing vitamin-rich hangover cures in the blender, but today a woman who subordinates her own artistic ambitions to keep her husband's flame from guttering will surely be attractive to a big chunk (say, fifty per cent) of the viewing population. Friedman's rebel against fifties conformity, Potter's orphan trapped by fame, Naifeh and Smith's borderline schizophrenic pursued by sexual demons, Kligman's wounded hero touched by a young woman's love—all fade into a big-screen image of a man with the power to revolutionize art history but with needs too great for any woman to fulfill.

In trying to mirror the contemporary audience, the Hollywood version will be no more and no less truthful than any other, because anyone, it seems, who looks too intently at Pollock will wind up seeing only himself. This may be why Pollock's story has such universal appeal. One of the most striking anecdotes that Kligman tells of Pollock is of a moment when she asked him who he would be if he were not himself. "I would be you," he told her. She offers that as a testament to their closeness, but I think it has more to do with Pollock's unformed sense of himself. He managed to send the same message to Friedman, to Potter, and to Naifeh and Smith. "Jackson cultivated all ends of his personality," his friend Reuben Kadish told Potter. "He was a different man on different occasions for himself, and he was a different man for different people." Paradoxically, this man who railed against phoniness in himself and in others fashioned himself into whatever he thought other people wanted him to be. What remained unchanging and authentic was his painful need. The combination of power and need is what led people, even in his lifetime, to link him to Marlon Brando and James Dean. It is what, distinct from his artistic talent, made him a star.

Up the road from the Pollock-Krasner House is Green River Cemetery, where Pollock is buried. His grave is marked by a large boulder that Potter, at Krasner's direction, excavated and transported from the woods nearby. Krasner's own tombstone is a much smaller boulder, placed directly in front of his. The symbolism of the arrangement is obvious to all. When I visited the cemetery in September, however, what was most noticeable was a spacious clearing just behind the Pollocks' plots. As several people had remarked, Green River was now as manicured as a golf course. "Before they cleared out the acre, it was all wooded," Potter told me. "In the winter, it would be full of creepers and vines. It always reminded me of one of Jackson's paintings." Now what you see from the Pollock boulders is a gravesite, on the cleared acre, that appears to be twenty plots in size. It is decorated with newly planted cedars, and on the day I visited there were two dozen potted chrysanthemums and a florist's bouquet sent by Quincy Jones. Here, in December, 1992, a weekend resident of today's East Hampton was buried: Steve Ross, the chairman of Time Warner and one of the leading forces in the modern movie business. Standing at Pollock's grave, I tried to imagine the vines and tendrils that once snaked like his swirls of paint, but I couldn't. All I could see was what I was looking for—the transforming power of Hollywood. ♦



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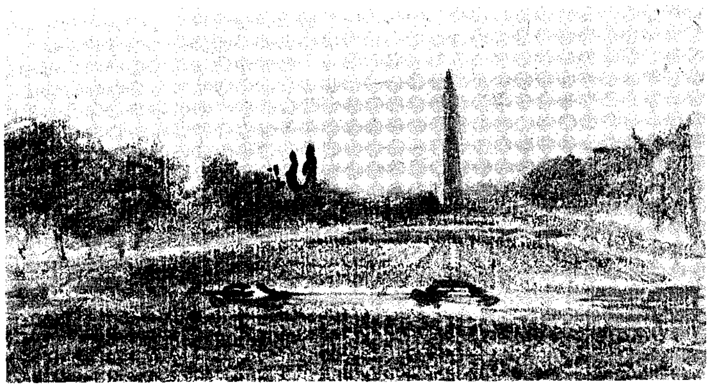
LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

THE WISDOM OF GEORGE MITCHELL

The Senate Majority Leader is a highly judicious man—so judicious, in fact, that he declined nomination to the Supreme Court.

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

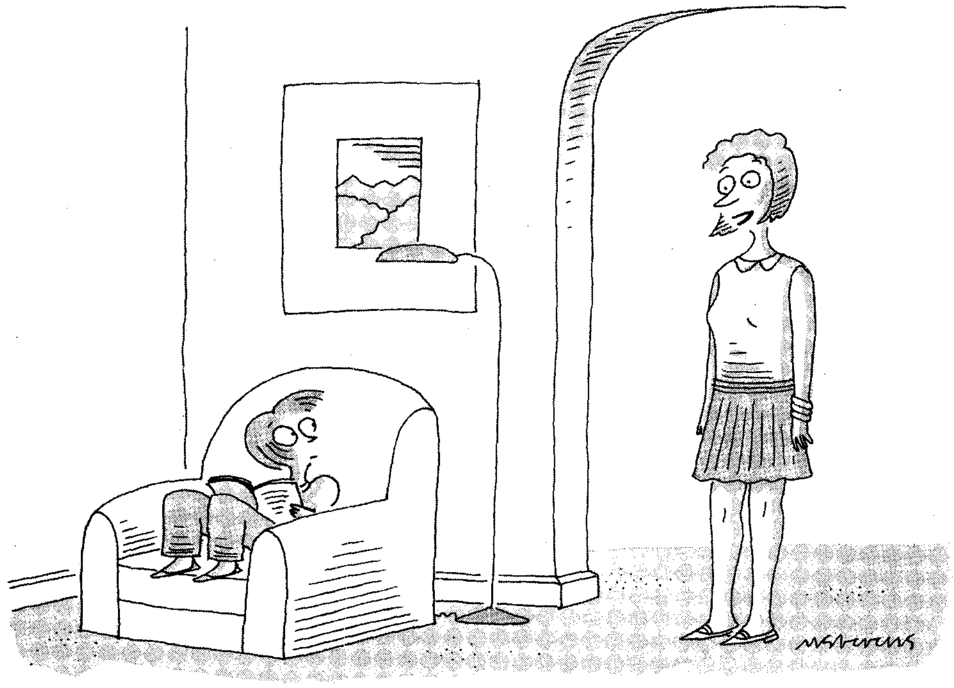


AXEL MAJA

THE more one thinks about George Mitchell's withdrawal from consideration for nomination to the Supreme Court, the more baffling it becomes. The night before Mitchell's announcement, President Clinton's aides and Mitchell's, too, were still confidently putting out the word that the Senate Majority Leader was the nominee. Rumors to the contrary notwithstanding, Clinton did indeed offer Mitchell the job, at the White House on April 11th. Mitchell declined; Clinton insisted that he sleep on it. The explanation Mitchell gave the next morning, to Clinton and then at a press conference—that he cannot serve the Court because he must serve the Senate—explained little. He was leaving the Senate in any case; there was talk that he might be named commissioner of baseball. Was Mitchell yielding, then, to weariness, to a dead-tired wish to retire to an Elysian field of dreams?

Perhaps. Yet the reason he gave, for all its seeming inadequacy, may be the real one. Mitchell's elaborate sense of propriety is a familiar element in his political calculations. As he saw it, the period between nomination and confirmation, however short, would expose him to a moral contradiction between his partisan role in the Senate and the nonpartisan ideal of the Supreme Court. How could he push his fellow senators to support Clinton's health plan, how could he push them on anything, while he was awaiting their approval for his elevation to a place where pushing is simply not done? Might his Republican colleagues be tempted to turn his dual position into an awkward liability, portraying him as power-hungry or even—God forbid—as unethical? So Mitchell, only a day after the Senate returned from spring recess, stalled the terrific momentum that had built up. The result was a performance that was all overture and no opera.

ON March 3rd, Mitchell and several other senators had dinner at the White House. According to Mitchell, he took the President aside and said, "I'd like to talk to you later." When the two were alone, upstairs in the living quarters, Mitchell told Clinton that he had decided to leave the Senate next January, at the expiration of his current term. Clinton urged Mitchell to run again; the Senator insisted that he would not. Then the President suggested that he might not have to serve the full six years of another term. Mitchell reiterated his intention to quit. They engaged in a dialogue of indirection, in which overt acknowledgment of the actual subject—Mitchell's possible appointment to the Supreme Court—was studiously avoided. Mitchell knew that Clinton had wanted to name him to the Court last year, after Byron



"Can Mommy borrow your baby-blue pinafore tonight, sweetie?"

White retired, but that his indispensable role in the Senate meant he had to stay in place. The deus ex machina that might intervene to shorten another term went unspecified. "There was no mention of the Supreme Court," Mitchell told me. "I had no idea of Justice Blackmun's intentions." Clinton had in fact been informed by Harry Blackmun in January that he would step down within the year. "The President never disclosed that to me," Mitchell told me. The following morning, when Mitchell publicly announced that he would not run again, he hinted with an exaggeratedly dull obliqueness at his openness to an offer: "I've made no final decision on the future. I'll consider other forms of public service and the private sector."

A month later, on April 6th, Justice Harry Blackmun, a Nixon appointee who by 1993 had become the most liberal member of a Court pulled steadily rightward by a quarter century of exclusively Republican appointments, went to the White House pressroom and announced his intention to retire. "The shoes are large," President Clinton said. A number of possibilities were mentioned: José A. Cabranes, the chief judge of the federal district court in Connecticut, long considered an obvious Hispanic choice—so obvious that he was even considered by George Bush; Drew S. Days, III, the Solicitor General, an African-American; Richard S. Arnold, a federal appeals court judge in Little Rock, a longtime F.O.B.; and eight or so others. But everything was moving toward a Mitchell appointment, the logic of which seemed inexorable. The day before Blackmun's announcement, the White House machinery was already in motion to clear Mitchell's path. Lloyd Cutler, the acting White House counsel, set out to determine whether there was any problem with having Mitchell remain as Majority Leader through the confirmation process; the question of emoluments—whether Mitchell would be entitled to any of the judicial-salary increases that he had voted for as a senator—was referred to the Justice Department for a prompt opinion.

Bill Clinton does not regard the Supreme Court as a temple to be inhabited by political vestal virgins; he has wanted all along to name a politician. Only in recent years has the Court been perceived as the ultimate in tenure for law professors and the final resting place for dogmatists unsullied by political—and, especially, electoral—experience. The current Supreme Court contains fewer politicians than any previous Supreme Court in American history. Clinton gave every sign of intending to break the pattern with the appointment of Mitchell.

The scenario that presented itself was astounding in the advantages it offered Clinton, and, it appeared, Mitchell, too. One of the most liberal candidates imaginable would be named to the Supreme Court without hazing by right-wing senators. (The feeling about Mitchell in the Senate is such that William Cohen, Mitchell's Republican colleague from Maine, with whom he wrote a book on the Iran-Contra affair, told me, "Clinton won't get anything easier in his Presidency.") By October, according to the scenario, Mitchell would have overseen the passage of a health-care plan—the most significant social legislation in sixty years and a capstone to his legislative career—and only then would he ascend to the Court. Once there, using his arsenal of nonviolent persuasion, appealing to reason and collegiality, he would build coalitions to outmaneuver the conservatives. The scenario unfolded further: Were William Rehnquist (who suffers from chronic back pain) to retire, Clinton would name Justice Mitchell Chief Justice. With the addition of a third Clinton appointee, the balance within the Court would shift dramatically. The Mitchell Court would then shape law for a generation. George Mitchell would be the most influential justice since Earl Warren, who had been the governor of California.

BLACKMUN'S announcement came during the congressional recess, when Mitchell was in Waterville, Maine, where he spends most weekends, with his brothers and sister and boyhood friends. (He is divorced and has one grown daughter.) His house is only a short distance from where he grew up, a neighborhood called Head of Falls, situated between the railroad tracks and the Kennebec River, which he matter-of-factly calls a "slum." The Senate is a millionaires' club whose leader is an anomaly. He is indisputably the most important of the five Senate Majority Leaders since Lyndon Johnson. His self-effacement masks his pride; his restraint is a measure of his intensity; his collegiality is an instrument of his partisanship.

George Mitchell is the fourth boy of George and Mary Mitchell's five children. George, Sr., the son of Irish-American parents, was orphaned at the age of four and put on a train in Boston that stopped in Bangor, where in a lineup in a Catholic church he was picked out for adoption by a Lebanese immigrant couple. In the small Lebanese Maronite community of Waterville, he met Mary, an illiterate immigrant, who continued to work the night shift in a textile mill while raising five children. After being laid off from another factory, George, Sr., landed a job as a janitor at Colby College. The three older Mitchell boys were high-school varsity basketball players. John, the oldest, famed as Swisher, was a star on the Waterville team that won the New England high-school championship.

George, smaller than his brothers, did not achieve distinction as an athlete. His father trained the young altar boy to speak clearly and deliberately by making him read aloud the week's Epistle from the opposite end of the house. He went on to Bowdoin College and Georgetown University Law School. To pay his way, he took courses at night while working days as an insurance adjuster. In 1962, at the age of twenty-nine, he was hired as an aide to Senator Edmund Muskie, who had once practiced law in Waterville and had heard of the famous Mitchell hoopsters. Muskie was the founding father of the modern Democratic Party in Maine, which had been a Republican bastion before his emergence. He was an ethnic- and class-coalition builder with a taciturn, Down East exterior—a model for his protégé. "George has some of the Mainer quality—self-containment, not wearing emotions on your sleeve, being cool," Berl Bernhard, a Washington lawyer who worked closely with Muskie, says. "It's almost an environmental characteristic."

"About everything good I know, I learned from Ed Muskie," Mitchell says. Among other things, he learned to count votes carefully, to know exactly the level of a candidate's support. Muskie, for his part, came, over time, to rely on Mitchell's prudent political judgment. In 1968, Muskie was nominated for Vice-President, and Mitchell, who by this time had also served as the state Democratic Party chairman, observed a national campaign for the first time. In the next cycle, Mitchell was the political director for Muskie's Presidential effort. Muskie's flashes of irascibility, and especially the notorious "crying" incident as he defended his wife from the depredations of the Manchester *Union Leader* during the New Hampshire primary, underlined for Mitchell the necessity of public self-control.

After the 1972 debacle, the campaign operative ran for chairman of the Democratic National Committee. "Why not me?" Mitchell told a friend. This decision was an open admission of his national ambitions. But he had the

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good fortune to lose and thus avoid earning enemies in a fractious party. In 1974, he was defeated in a race for governor, which he would probably have won but for the last-minute surge of an independent candidate. He was surprised that he had got the count wrong.

Senator Muskie, his patron, saw to it that he was appointed United States Attorney and then a federal district court judge. This experience with procedure and evidence would prepare him for deploying Senate rules with the authoritative air of a judge. In 1980, Jimmy Carter named Muskie his Secretary of State. One of Muskie's first acts was to fly back to Maine to persuade the governor, Joe Brennan, to appoint Mitchell to the Senate seat he was vacating. In 1982, the National Conservative Political Action Committee, a right-wing group that produced negative ads about Democratic candidates, targeted the new senator. Mitchell cast their assault on him as an alien invasion of Maine, and he won with sixty-one per cent of the vote. The next time, he won with eighty-one per cent. He had become unassailable.

In 1985, the Senator took over the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. In 1986, the Democrats won eleven seats and control of the Senate. "Never again will there be the period of the dominant Reagan Presidency of the first six years," Mitchell declared. His performance in the elections won him a place on the Select Committee on the Iran-Contra affair. He was profoundly offended by Oliver North's patriotic bombast at the hearings. "Please remember," he admonished North, "that it is possible for an American to disagree with you on aid to the Contras and still love God, and still love this country, just as much as you do. Although He is regularly asked to do so, God does not take sides in American politics." Mitchell's sternness contrasted sharply with the timorousness of the committee chairman, Senator Daniel Inouye. In the contest for Majority Leader after the 1988 elections, the two men faced off as the principal candidates, but the battle had really been fought at the Iran-Contra hearings. Few believed that Mitchell would win outright on a first ballot in the Democratic caucus. He had counted carefully, though.

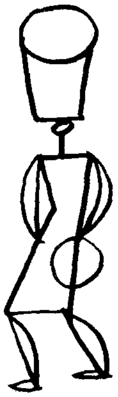
Mitchell's eight-year rise to Majority Leader was swift by the standards of the institution. Yet Republicans prophesied that his elevation augured further Democratic irrelevance. What the Democrats gained with Mitchell was a reassuring, dignified image: he gave the Republicans no excuse for attacking his party as erratic. But what the Democrats did not get with him was a dramatic national spokesman. "There's nothing inconsistent in having a polite manner and firm beliefs," Mitchell told me, summarizing his modus operandi.

In his own relentless way, Mitchell targeted the weaknesses in Bush's Presidency and struck with precision. With exquisite politesse and delicacy, through a protracted budget summit in 1990, Mitchell coaxed George Bush to abandon his ironclad campaign pledge, "No New Taxes"—an act that repudiated the Reaganite theology and proved devastating to Bush politically. Then, after the House passed the capital-gains-tax cut that Bush had begged for, Mitchell assiduously, and successfully, worked to smother it in the Senate. The right-wing annoyance with Bush turned into fury: he was not just a betrayer but an impotent one. On the Democratic side, there was some grumbling that Mitchell was too circumspect, too solicitous of the opposition's sensitivities. In truth, Mitchell inflicted deep wounds with the utmost attention to courtesy. Privately, he considered a run for the Presidency in 1996—a plan premised on the expectation that the Democrats would lose in 1992.

For Bill Clinton, Mitchell has strained every fibre. But he has remained in character. During the budget battle last year, he kept the White House from cas-

"So nice to see things 'à la financière' again."

tigating wayward Democrats. Mitchell told me recently, "The budget was the cornerstone of the President's economic program. We had a half dozen Democrats who didn't vote with us. A lot of people, including several Democratic senators, were angry and outraged and insisted that I punish them somehow. But I needed the votes of some of those six Democrats to fend off the Republicans' killer amendments. People say, 'Change your style, be more rough.' If we get to the point of the last vote in the last session of the last Senate, I might change my tactics. You have to think ahead. There's always another issue."



Health care has always been one of Mitchell's causes. Before he became Majority Leader, he was the chairman of the health-care subcommittee of the Finance Committee. He is one of about a dozen senators who are truly conversant with the details of health-care policy. In the end, the health-care bill that is presented on the Senate floor will be Mitchell's bill, constructed from elements of bills drafted by the Finance and Labor Committees. The battle royal over this bill will crown his career.

When the Senate scattered for spring break, Mitchell went back to Waterville to do his homework for the annual Democratic senators' retreat, held last weekend, at which he would lead a three-hour panel on health care. Then Blackmun made his announcement, and Mitchell became the front-runner. "I can't imagine any votes against him," Senator Cohen told me. "There's no inherent conflict in terms of his position." Joseph Biden, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, which must confirm Supreme Court nominees, told me that he saw no conflict of interest in Mitchell's serving as Majority Leader throughout the confirmation process: "I don't see any problem at all." Biden had a different worry, more prescient: "I'm just afraid he won't take it." Mitchell's innate caution might combine with his desire for financial security and his hope for release from the stress of public life.

"I honestly don't know what I'm going to do," Mitchell told me four days before he made his decision. We discussed an April 8th article in the Los Angeles *Times* headed "CLINTON STRONGLY WEIGHS POLITICIAN FOR COURT CHOICE," by David G. Savage. Savage wrote, "The high court of 40 years ago was led by a former California governor, and included three former U.S. senators; two former U.S. attorneys general, one of whom had been the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trial; a U.S. solicitor general and a former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. . . . By comparison, the Supreme Court nominees of recent years have been unknown to most Americans." Mitchell remarked enigmatically, "How quickly we forget history."

Baseball-team owners had been pursuing Mitchell for months about becoming commissioner. Their finagling and petty chicanery appeared to him, a friend says, to be a pleasant diversion. For all the trouble he might encounter in presiding over a new body of egotists, Mitchell, who has no money to speak of, would suddenly be a man of means. He would have an eminence and authority beyond the honor of sitting in a glass box above the diamond. He would be more than his brothers' equal as a sportsman, yet still a kind of judge: the umpire-in-chief. The family's loose ends would be tied up.

The judicial quality of Mitchell's leadership of the Senate, which commended him as a Supreme Court nominee, was revealed in his refusal to become one: he is a stickler for the rules. To him, being nominated while serving as Majority Leader would be a confusion of realms.

Mitchell's decision forces Clinton back to considerations his nomination would have finessed. With Mitchell, Clinton presumably didn't have to worry about the confirmation process. He didn't have to worry about the nominee's past, the nominee's gender and ethnicity, the Democratic constituencies clamoring for their turn. Now he does.

None of this, of course, precludes Clinton from naming Mitchell to fill the next Court vacancy—perhaps as Chief Justice. But right moments have a way of passing. Who now speaks of Justice Cuomo? ♦

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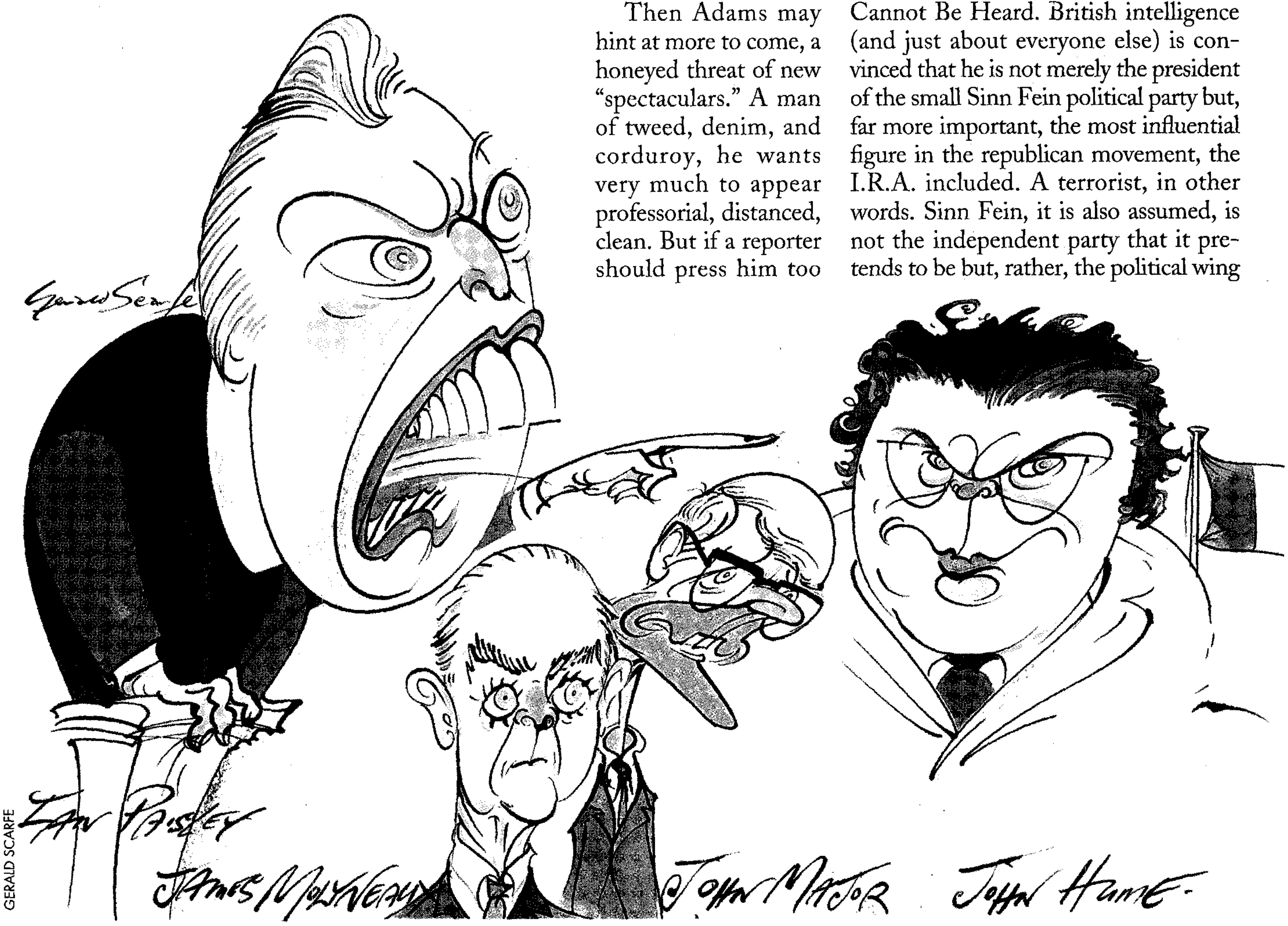
BELFAST CONFETTI

In America, Gerry Adams was hailed as the sane face of nationalism—an Irish Nelson Mandela. But to the many people in Northern Ireland living in fear of the Catholic and Protestant paramilitary factions that claim to represent them, Adams is just another man who won't let an old war die.

BY DAVID REMNICK

THE blood-weary souls in Belfast whose fate it is to cover "the Troubles" have grown accustomed to the ritual of Gerry Adams' expressing his "sincere regret" after the latest act of terror. It is a danse macabre—the media and the revolutionary—and yet is surprisingly bland, workaday. A few of Adams' adjutants will call a press conference at the abandoned Conway Mill, off Falls Road, and string up a backdrop banner for the television cameras: "Towards a Lasting Peace." With everyone assembled, Adams appears before the microphones to trot out his homiletic explanations for one adventure or another of the Irish Republican Army: the blowing up of, say, a fish store and all the customers within; the point-blank assassination of an off-duty detective at the dog track; a mortar attack; a grenade through a picture window. The loss of life is "regrettable," of course, but not condemned, exactly. ("I do not engage in the politics of denunciation," he says.) It is, after all, the British who are ultimately at fault.This is just an "event" in a "broader conflict." Then Adams may hint at more to come, a honeyed threat of new "spectaculars." A man of tweed, denim, and corduroy, he wants very much to appear professorial, distanced, clean. But if a reporter should press him too hard he will drop his collected tone. "I can understand an old hack's cynicism. Reporters are a very cynical breed of people," Adams said recently as he put an I.R.A. bomb attack in its "proper context." Finally, the reporters will leave the mill, pleased to have their quote, their sound bite, but no less disgusted for having sat through the same performance dozens of times before.

The ritual does not quite end there, for now comes the complicated matter of packaging. In the United Kingdom, Gerry Adams is, by law, the Voice That Cannot Be Heard. British intelligence (and just about everyone else) is convinced that he is not merely the president of the small Sinn Fein political party but, far more important, the most influential figure in the republican movement, the I.R.A. included. A terrorist, in other words. Sinn Fein, it is also assumed, is not the independent party that it pretends to be but, rather, the political wing



GERALD SCARFE

of the I.R.A. For these associations, London has tried to inflict upon Adams a kind of media stigmata, a video bruise. When Adams appears on British television—and that means Northern Irish television, too—an actor dubs in his voice. Same face, same words, different voice. This is a practice rendered somewhat absurd when one considers that Adams first began negotiating directly with representatives of Her Majesty's Government when he was in his early twenties. He is now forty-five.

Thanks to the Clinton Administration, Adams was awarded a two-day visa to the United States earlier this year, despite fierce British objections. In New York, he was free to go on the morning shows and on "Donahue," "Charlie Rose," and "Larry King Live," and he was free to speak in his own voice. With his more indulgent hosts, and with an audience that does not focus much anymore on the Irish question, Adams proved a master. Any untoward questions about his links to the I.R.A. could be brushed aside with a coy denial. America also provided a ready constituency. Many Irish-Americans are more strident in their demand for immediate British withdrawal than even the Catholics of Northern Ireland. (In politics, distance creates uncomplicated vision. Witness the way many American Jews can be more Israel-right-or-wrong than the average Israeli.)

Without much friction from his hosts, Adams made a case for himself as an embattled historical figure who could drag his more absolutist brethren toward the olive branch if only London, Dublin, and the Protestant majority in Ulster would yield. More than once, it was suggested that his role in Northern Ireland was like that of Mandela in South Africa, or Arafat in the Middle East, and Adams, for his part, accepted the mantle: the reasonable man, the man of peace. He has no right to the comparison. Mandela and Arafat lead majority movements and have finally renounced terrorism. Adams does neither.

The leaders of Sinn Fein, unlike their opposite numbers among the Protestant unionists, are publicity-keen, and from the start they knew precisely how Adams should exploit his time in New York: which programs to visit, what charms to use. The current press spokesman, Richard McAuley, has a friendly manner and an earnest style that puts one in mind of a yuppie Democratic Party operative. He is professionally likable, a pal. In the United Kingdom, people tend to be a bit skeptical about the Sinn Fein publicity apparatus. They are aware, for example, that one of McAuley's predecessors, Danny Morrison, is serving an eight-year jail sentence for "imprisoning" a police informer.

Back at home, opponents of the classic I.R.A. posture (one hand at the ballot box, the other gripping an Armalite assault rifle) grew apoplectic as they saw Gerry Adams coasting from one talk show to the next as if he were on the brink of the Nobel Peace Prize. Even his supporters could not believe how smoothly it all went, what rapt attention their man received. They especially could not believe the convivial mood on "Larry King Live."

"If we were to come over to Belfast," King said eagerly, "would you sit down with all the parties and show the world what's going on?"

"Of course I would," Adams said. "Absolutely."

"I'd like to do that."

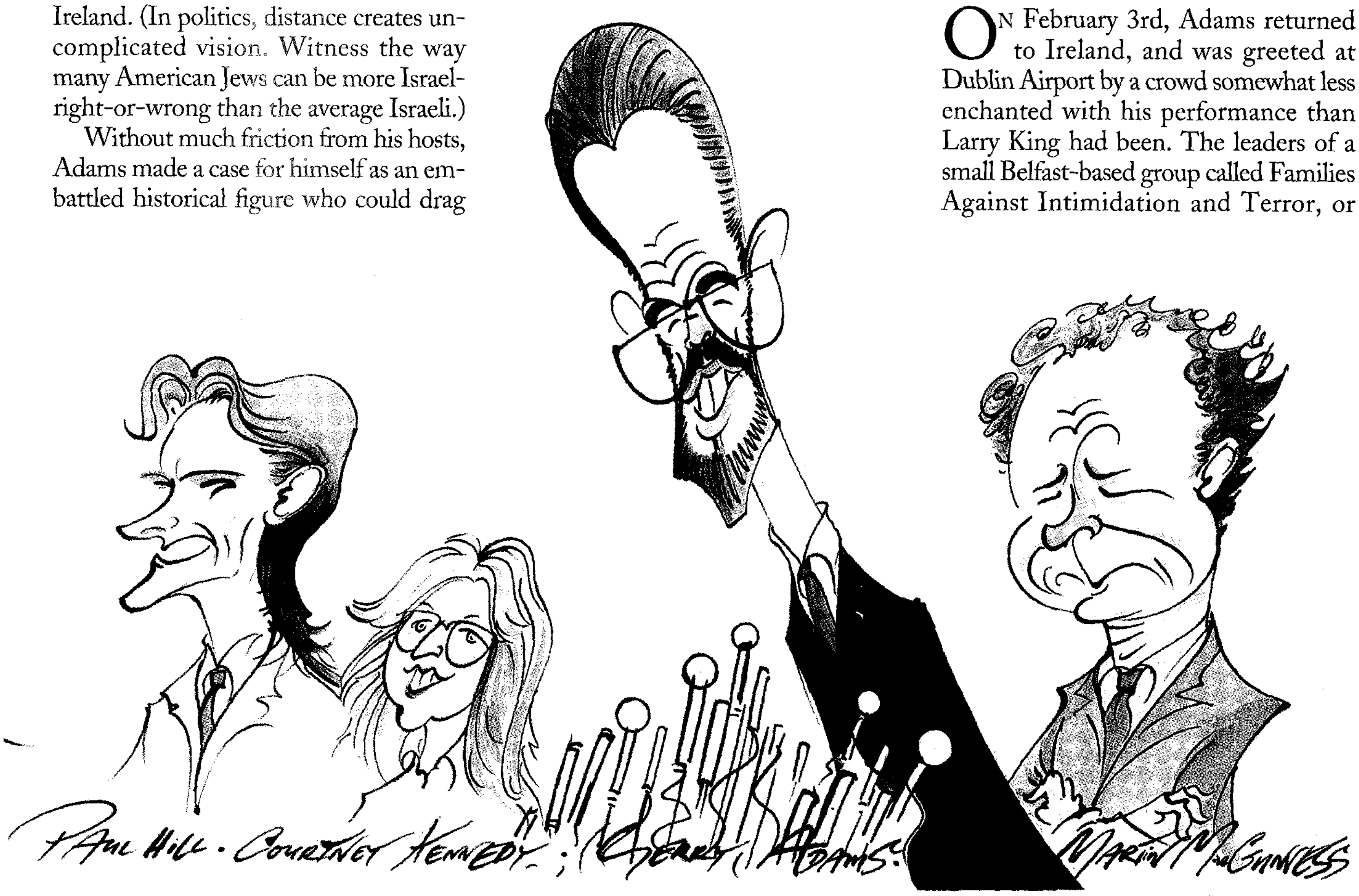
"You'd be very welcome. I'll also buy you a pint of Guinness."

"I won't be shot, though?"

"No, no," Adams said. "You'll have your pint of Guinness."

Thus assured, King moved on: "Bedford, New Hampshire. Last call for Gerry Adams. Hello?"

ON February 3rd, Adams returned to Ireland, and was greeted at Dublin Airport by a crowd somewhat less enchanted with his performance than Larry King had been. The leaders of a small Belfast-based group called Families Against Intimidation and Terror, or


Paul Hill · Courtney Kennedy ; Gerry Adams ; Martin McGuinness

FAIT, had organized an angry welcoming party. The group assembled a few dozen people, mostly victims of terrorist acts inflicted either by the I.R.A. or by the Protestant paramilitary groups—the Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.) and the larger Ulster Defense Association (U.D.A.). FAIT's leaders issued a press release saying they wanted "to bring Gerry Adams back to reality" after he had "lived the lie of the 'Peacemaker' " on his trip to America.

Maurice Healy, a fifty-eight-year-old man from Cork, who says he was kidnapped and beaten by the I.R.A., lunged at Adams, shouting, "You fascist, psychotic bastard!" Later, Healy said of Adams, "He's got his Donegal-tweed coat. He's got his humanitarian dimension up front. It's easy to sell it to the Americans. He's projected himself as a peacemaker. What happened in America was totally unbalanced, in that people like me were not represented." Alan McBride, whose wife and father-in-law were killed last year in an I.R.A. bombing on Shankill Road, in Belfast, was furious that in America Adams had been treated "like some kind of pop star." McBride told a reporter, "Adams is a murderer, because he supports the killing of innocent men, women, and children. He is up to his neck in blood."

Another demonstrator at Dublin Airport was a woman whose losses to the Troubles have been so great, so numerous, that they are almost freakish. Of the more than three thousand people who have been killed in sectarian violence since the Troubles began and British troops were sent into Northern Ireland, in 1969, ten of them have been relatives of Sally McCartan. At the airport, she was enraged—"revolted," she said—at being in the same room with Adams. But her fury was no match for that of Maurice Healy or Alan McBride. The press reports hardly mentioned her. A few weeks later, out of camera range, at FAIT's small office, on High Street in Belfast, she was more eager to talk.

The FAIT headquarters is a mess—stacked with clippings and other papers. Among the posters on the walls are one of Mahatma Gandhi and one of Gerry Adams, drenched to the elbows in blood. Sally McCartan is fifty-five, and at times she looks years older; when she talks about her losses to terrorism, her face clenches, the lines deepen, her eyes lose their shine and focus, like broken windows. Though she and her husband, Sean, are Catholic, they used to live peacefully near Protestant neighbors on Ormeau Road. When the Troubles began, their tragedies started to accumulate, absurdly, randomly, as if they were meant to stand for the city's terror.

"The first time anything happened was with my brother-in-law, Jimmy McCartan," she said. "It was 1972, when things had really got bad. Jimmy was twenty-one. He had an invitation to a wedding, and he dressed himself up nice. There was a disco out at the Park Avenue Hotel, near Hollywood, east of Belfast, on the water, and they all decided to go. He was at the bar with a mate, and he overheard these U.D.A. guys saying, 'He's a McCartan from the Markets area.' By that time, the Protestants thought all Catholics were in the I.R.A. Jimmy approached them and said, look, he didn't live in the Markets, he lived in Hollywood.

"But it was going wrong. Jimmy was really afraid. He asked the barman if there was a way to be protected. Could he slip out somehow? The barman opened a back door and let him out. But there were U.D.A. all over, and Jimmy was out there in the dark with his mate. His mate ran one way and he ran the other. His mate was climbing a wall to get away, and, as he did, he heard voices shouting, 'We got him! We got McCartan.' And so this other lad ran home to tell my husband, Sean, and me there was trouble.

"This was about eleven-forty-five at night. They found the body the next morning at six. They'd dumped Jimmy by a football pitch and a wee creek in East Belfast. He was mutilated, he was. They'd stripped him of his Chelsea boots and his new coat. The jeans were off him. He was stripped of his watch, his rings. They'd hung him first from the ceiling on a hook at some club and beat him dead. His fingers were all broken, his knuckles all busted. They cut his ears off. They cut him, uh, down below. A terrible death. They beat him with the starting handle of a car. He had two hundred and fifty cigarette burns on his hands and his face. They beat him so bad around the face that his face was swelled up like a gorilla's. When he was in the coffin, after the wake, when the people were gone, my sister-in-law and I decided to have a look. The undertaker said he'd never seen a corpse like it. He was right. Jimmy's legs and feet were black and blue, all swelled. He got a terrible death. The fear was in the family. Later, there were seven arrests, and they were all released except one, who took the rap. When they were released, the Protestant paramilitaries lit bonfires and held a celebration. They called them the Magnificent Seven."

On New Year's Day of 1974, a cousin of Sally McCartan's was shot and killed by an I.R.A. man who had been aiming at a British soldier. A few months later, Sean's brother Noel and his sister Lily were walking home from a bar; a gunman jumped out, shot Noel dead, and was seen escaping in the direction of a Protestant neighborhood. A week later, a few gunmen broke into Lily's house,

probably looking for her, and fatally shot her husband, John. “Lily’s never recovered,” Sally McCartan said. “She lives with relatives in an attic room. She doesn’t know day from night. Her food has to be brought up to her, and she never leaves that room. She’d been a lovely girl with a lovely figure and dark hair, and now she’s all white and gray. Her son went to drink. And then he was found in his house, battered, five or six years ago. It still puzzles us. They beat him to death. We didn’t have the heart to tell Lily her son was killed. Every year, we send her an extra card at Christmas from her son. So she won’t know. That’s a sad thing for you.”

The shootings, the deaths, never seemed to stop. The latest came in March of 1993. “My son Damien was driving a taxi part time, one of those hole-in-the-wall taxi places in the Markets district,” Sally said. “One night, this young man came in and he seemed very nervous. He asked Damien for a taxi to pick up his girlfriend. When they were halfway there, the man said, ‘I’m sorry to tell you this, I’m I.R.A. and we’ll have to take your car.’ Damien refused. But there were three other I.R.A. men waiting there, and there was some wrestling about. Damien threw a couple of them out and then ran to a social club. He called his older brother Sean and told him where to try to cut off the car. And Sean did—he cut off the car. Damien came with his friends, and the I.R.A. guys gave the keys back.

“That was on a Saturday night at around midnight. The trouble was, they’d embarrassed the I.R.A. On the Monday night, I got a call from someone looking for young Sean. They said, ‘Get someone here quick. Damien’s been shot, and they’re looking for Sean now.’ I thought it was the loyalists, the Prods, who’d done it. They’d hit the taxi depot before. I saw black and was crying something fierce. Was Damien dead, or what? So I ran with my daughter, and we saw smoke all around. They’d burned Damien’s car. It was his own people, the I.R.A. Damien had been shot in the legs, eight shots. But it was like that wasn’t the most important thing to Damien. He was furious when they told him about his car. He went mad! Crazy! He was more worried about his car than his legs. He’d worked so hard to get it.”

Sally knew that the I.R.A. would likely come looking for young Sean, and it was then that she went public, appearing on television and in the local papers. When she did, Nancy Gracey, a woman who had started FAIT, in 1990, to protect her son, came calling. Like the rest of the people who had come to FAIT or eventually worked there, Sally McCartan saw publicity as the only way to prevent more bloodshed. (The I.R.A., for its part, dismisses FAIT as a front for British intelligence, or, alternatively, as a front for the tiny socialist Workers’ Party. A Protestant paramilitary told me he thought FAIT was “just a bunch of well-meaning sods, aren’t they?”)

So far, Sally’s strategy has worked. Sean has gone unharmed. Sally now works at FAIT a few days a week, counselling other people who live in fear of the paramilitaries. While Sally McCartan has found a mission in her volunteer work, her husband, Sean, has drifted. He can no longer work. He doesn’t talk much about what he has seen or about the relatives he has lost. He rarely goes out. Not long ago, Sally found him in a parked car, in an abandoned lot, his head leaning against the wheel, his eyes wide and staring.

EXCEPT in Ireland and Britain, the Troubles have become a minor story on the foreign-news pages. An explosion rates a two-paragraph notice in “Around the World,” somewhere between an Indian bus crash and a Danish election. And not without reason. Compared with the carnage and the chaos lately in Bosnia, Burundi, Rwanda, Israel, South Africa, Georgia, Haiti, Tajikistan, Mexico, India, and a dozen other scenes of sectarian struggle and outright war, Northern Ireland is tranquillity itself. Every year, there are enough explosions and killings to generate a new packet of the familiar images—the bomb-shattered corpse, the child bicycling past the burned-out car—but the death toll has eased considerably. In 1972, four hundred and sixty-seven people were killed in sectarian violence; in the past decade, an average of about ninety have been killed every year. Paramilitaries on both sides still act brutally in their own communities, taking on the role of judge and jury and meting out punishment: kneecappings, beatings, exiles. But, with gangs at work on the Lower East Side and in South Central Los Angeles, why should that rate many paragraphs in the American press?

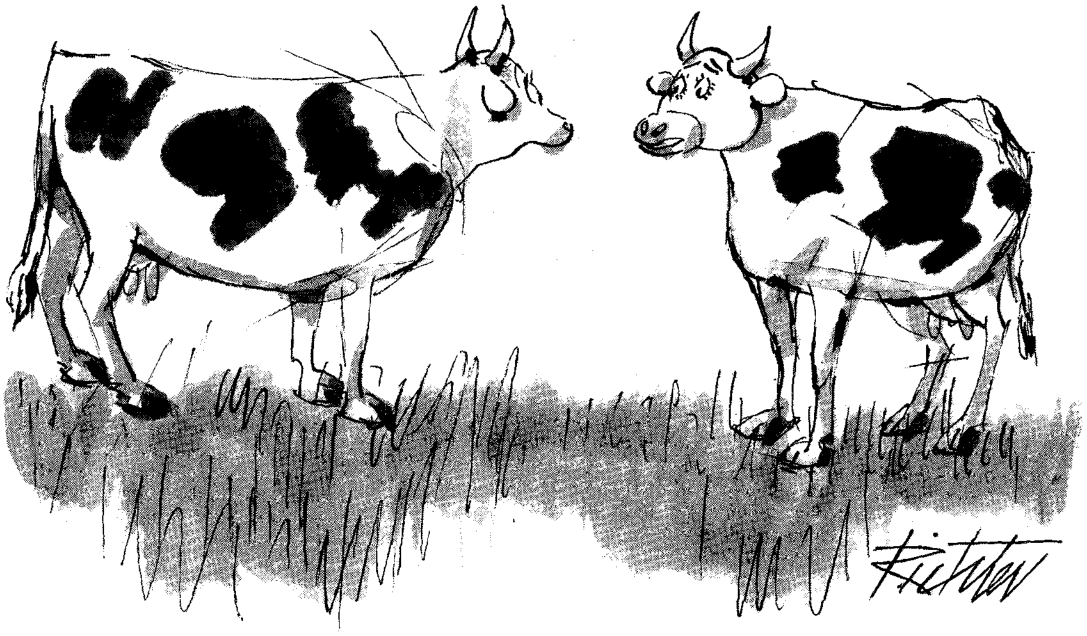
To the newly arrived visitor, it is jarring to walk down a street in Belfast and see an armored car driving by, in which British soldiers are not merely holding their machine guns but aiming

TURN AGAIN

There is a map of the city which shows the bridge that was never built.
A map which shows the bridge that collapsed, the streets that never existed.
Ireland’s Entry, Elbow Lane, Weigh-House Lane, Back Lane, Stone-Cutter’s Entry—
Today’s plan is already yesterday’s—the streets that were there are gone.
And the shape of the jails cannot be shown for security reasons.

The linen backing is falling apart—the Falls Road hangs by a thread.
When someone asks me where I live, I remember where I used to live.
Someone asks me for directions, and I think again. I turn into
A side street to try to throw off my shadow, and history is changed.

—CIARAN CARSON
(BELFAST, 1987)



"I said no to drugs, but the F.D.A. said yes."

them, moving them slowly along the range of pedestrians. It is jarring to walk along Falls Road, a Catholic neighborhood, or along Shankill Road, a Protestant one, and see guard towers, police stations with twenty-foot walls, and barbed wire—the Peace Lines that seal off one neighborhood from another. The city bristles. It watches. Everywhere, there are teams of soldiers who guard the cop on the beat. Everywhere, there are infrared goggles; Starlight II LIEI "Twiggy" Night Observation Devices; self-loading rifles with image-intensification night sights; surveillance cameras; walkie-talkies; peepholes; helicopters hovering above Murder Mile, in North Belfast—going nowhere, whipping the air, waiting for new Troubles.

But there is a stasis at work. Over twenty-five years, a generation of people have grown accustomed to this life of nervousness. Belfast has achieved an acceptable level of tragedy. For anyone under thirty-five or so, political violence has been as much a feature of life as the rain showers and the rainbows that sweep across the city every few days. "It's the news every night, but unless it touches your close friends or family you don't pay it much mind," one young barman told me. And if you do not live in working-class Belfast, or near certain rural trouble spots along the border with the Republic, life is positively serene. Northern Ireland is, by modern standards, quiet, conservative, scrubbed, under control. One's chances of being murdered there are only a fifteenth of what they are in Washington, D.C. Drugs and street crime are also a fraction of what they are in London or Dublin. Catholics no longer suffer the level of discrimination they once knew as a fact of life. Ever since the rise of the civil-rights movement, in the late sixties, the Protestant dominance of local politics, education, and culture has declined. Districts are no longer gerrymandered to the Protestants' advantage; discrimination in the workplace and the universities has diminished. As the linen mills and the docks have closed over the years, unemployment has soared (in some lower-income Catholic areas, the rate of male unemployment is as high as eighty per cent), but welfare rates are generous—compared with those in the Republic of Ireland, at least. There are signs of upward mobility. Where once the middle-class and upper-middle-class neighborhoods around Malone Road in South Belfast were completely Protestant, more and more Catholics have moved into the area. And the middle classes have had some success in experimenting with integrated Catholic-and-Protestant schools.

There is even a figure of political hope in Northern Ireland: John Hume, a member of Parliament from Londonderry (Derry to the nationalists) and the leader of the main party among Catholics—the Social Democratic and Labour Party, or S.D.L.P. Hume's career began in the civil-rights movement; he was one of its foremost thinkers and a key supporter of nonviolence during mass demonstrations in Londonderry in 1968. He has become the one politician universally accepted by Dublin, London, Washington, and Sinn Fein. A mesmeric speaker and an arm-bender of a traditional kind, he, and not Adams, is the most influential voice on Irish affairs on Capitol Hill. In the nineteen-eighties, the Irish Foreign Minister, Brian Lenihan, would try to press the Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neill, into one position or another. O'Neill would hear none of it. "I go by what John Hume says," he would growl. What Hume says is consistent with his position over the past three decades. He is committed to the establishment of a united Ireland, but renounces violent struggle and acknowledges the complexities of dealing with the Protestant majority in the North. He is convinced that the time will come when even the most obstinate unionists will come to the negotiating table. In this he has the support of the vast majority of the Catholics in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein is a relatively small party: it wins about eleven per cent of the vote in the North and less than two per cent in the Republic.

In the past, Hume was uncompromising in his criticism of the militant republicans, going so far as to call Sinn Fein and the I.R.A. fascist. But that rift has healed. Last year, Hume and Adams together worked out a framework for at least the start of negotiations with London and Dublin; London and Dublin answered last December with a joint declaration that also promises, in effect, a devolution of British influence in Ulster. Although many political observers cannot see profound or irreconcilable differences between the two documents, Sinn Fein has demanded "clarifications" and has alternated armed attacks and brief ceasefires, while London, in turn, has said, in essence, "Put down your arms for good and then we'll talk." And so the beast keeps chasing its own tail.

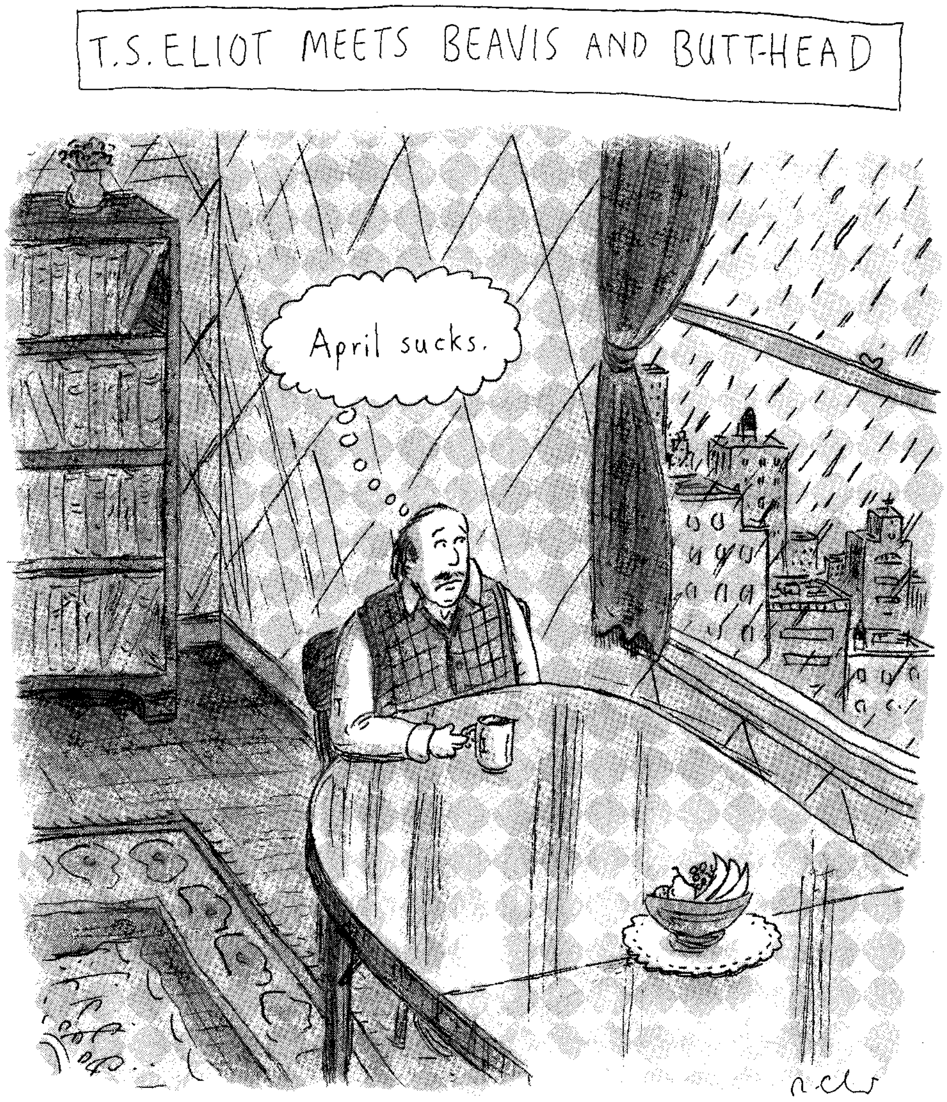
Not to insult the suffering of those who have to live through sectarian conflicts all over the world, it must be said that for the visitor these conflicts often have about them a depressing sameness, a futility in which history and language are twisted beyond all recognition. Arrive in Armenia, say, and within half an hour you will hear of how the Azeris across the border started the horrific 1988 earthquake with a series of underground nuclear explosions; you will hear about a "secret alliance" of Azeris and Turks; you will hear about who was where first, who is the true owner of this church or that mountain pass. Cross the border into Azerbaijan, and you will hear the same tone of conspiracy, the same warring versions of history.

All this is true in Ireland, too, and has been for centuries. To the Protestant unionists, the signal moment in history is the seventeenth-century siege of Londonderry, a battle between the rival English kings William III (a Protestant) and James II (a Catholic). James nearly succeeded in pushing the Protestant settlers north and off the island, but failed; the Protestant victory at the Boyne River, in 1690, is celebrated every July. Even now, the graffito "Remember the Boyne" is to be seen on walls in Protestant neighborhoods. The license plate on the family Jaguar that belonged to the militant unionist Ian Paisley read "MOI 1690," a commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne. The attitude of endangerment, of siege, persists to this day.

To Catholic nationalists, the rise of the Celts is where history begins, and the 1916 Easter Rising is the signal event of the Cause, the great moment of promise and martyrdom. When I met with Gerry Adams at the Sinn Fein press center later in my stay in Belfast, the one decoration in the tiny, dingy room where we talked was a mounted reproduction of the 1916 "Proclamation of the Irish Republic," which was read outside the Dublin General Post Office on the day the uprising began. It was the republican answer to the Ulster Covenant of 1912—the Protestant document that called for eternal ties to England. Throughout our talks, Adams would glance up at the poster, as if for guidance.

Of all the twists and ironies of Irish history, perhaps the most profound is the reason for the presence in Ulster of thousands of British Army troops. There is no disputing the Protestants' unchecked reign of discrimination well into the late sixties. When Catholic students and activists began civil-rights protests in Belfast and Londonderry, in 1968, the police were clearly on the side of the Protestant government, and did little to stop assaults on the republican protesters. When British troops arrived in Ulster with the expressed purpose of protecting the demonstrators, the Catholic population celebrated their arrival. The troops were to be their barrier. But soon the elaborate set of arrangements disintegrated. From 1971 to 1975, the British used their soldiers to round up suspected republican activists (and a few unionist ones as well) and jail them without trial. After setting out as protectors, the British Army now behaved, in republican eyes, as an occupying force. The enmity reached its height in 1972, when British forces shot and killed thirteen Catholic protesters in Londonderry—an event memorialized among republicans as Bloody Sunday.

Of all the poets of Northern Ireland—and there have been a remarkable number of them for a country of a million and a half—Ciaran Carson is the one who captures best the futility of the Troubles, the geography of suspicion in Belfast, and, especially, this quality of historical argument: the way the two sides talk right past each other, speak-


T.S. ELIOT MEETS BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD
April sucks.

ing the same language but remaining incomprehensible to each other. In a few lines, Carson grasps just how the selective use of history creates the dividing wall of politics:

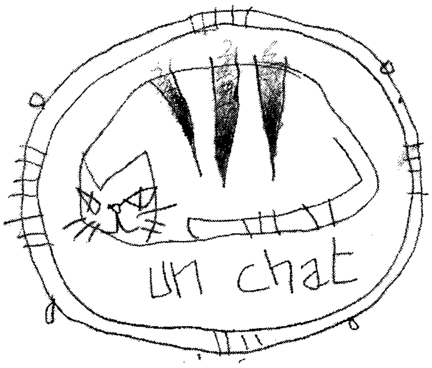
> . . . commentators commentating on
>
> The flash-point of the current
> Trouble, though there's any God's
> amount
> Of Nines and Sixes: 1916, 1690, The
> Nine Hundred Years' War,
> whatever.
> Or maybe we can go back to the
> Year Dot. . . .

In any sectarian conflict, a political resolution never comes from resolving who was where and who was right in the Year Dot. To be visionary means to throw off the weight of history and take advantage of what few openings exist. The triumph of the Israeli-P.L.O. agreement last year grew out of P.L.O. weakness, Israeli weariness, and a leap of faith on both sides. But, as in Hebron or Johannesburg, there is no guarantee that even the most courageous leap will be rewarded with stability and civil peace.

In Ireland, a number of circumstances have been cause for hope. The British, for one, have admitted that they no longer have any strategic or economic interest in staying in Northern Ireland. "The British psychological process of detachment is beginning," the London *Independent's* resident correspondent David McKittrick told me one day at a West Belfast pub. "They don't expect to be here forever. If it weren't for the unionists, they would leave right away. The old imperialism is gone. There is no security argument anymore. There are no Spanish galleons coming, no Russians storming the beaches." Not only have most Britons grown tired of sending thousands of troops off to Ulster, and not only do they see no point in just waiting for the next I.R.A. attack, but there is also no money in what they're doing. Britain, the colonizer, puts more than three billion pounds into Northern Ireland every year, a billion of that in security. For years, in fact, the key questions for the British have been not if they should get out but, rather, when and how. The story goes that when the present British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, was named Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in the fall of 1984, and was being driven around Belfast, he saw "Brits Out" written on walls in Catholic neighborhoods and is said to have remarked, " 'Brits Out'! But how? For God's sake, how?"

Perhaps the two most immediate obstacles to Britain's extricating itself from the Irish quagmire in the near future are John Major's tentative majority in Parliament and an unwillingness simply to abandon the Protestant majority of Ulster. At times, Major's hold on power seems to rely very strongly on the nine Ulster Unionist Party M.P.s. All sides, including Sinn Fein, also acknowledge that if the British were simply to go home tomorrow—if they were to dismantle their military bases, their surveillance apparatus, and the barriers separating Falls Road from Shankill Road—the result could be violence far worse than anything seen in the last decade. There could even be a civil war. "If they were to leave tomorrow, what of these interfaces between neighborhoods?" Brian Feeney, a former Belfast city-council member who is a spokesman for Hume's S.D.L.P., told me. "This place could turn out to be a Sarajevo. The Brits will not allow a Bosnia on the western edge of Europe."

On an early-spring day, I spent an afternoon with a well-known poet named Michael Longley—a Protestant, who lives in South Belfast. Like Ciaran Carson, he is disgusted with the persistence of fundamentalism on both sides of the Irish question: with the I.R.A.'s unwillingness to forswear arms, with the unionists' Afrikaner-like sense of siege and superiority. "These sides are divided from each other in their souls," Longley said. We were walking along the soft turf of the Giant's Ring outside Belfast—a burial ground thought to date from the Bronze Age. "They adhere to ridiculous visions of themselves and their histories. I call it 'the green wank' and 'the orange wank.' The green wank, the republican delusion, is of some romantic, maudlin Ireland, poetry, the sod—all that shit. Sinn Fein is immersed in that, and yet Sinn Fein itself is so lacking in nimbleness and political imagination. It is so out of date. The only real border left in Europe is the Irish border, which Sinn Fein is intent on cementing. And then there's the orange wank, King William crossing the Boyne on a white horse. Sometimes these loyalists—it's as if all they'd got were their guns and their Bibles, and that's it.

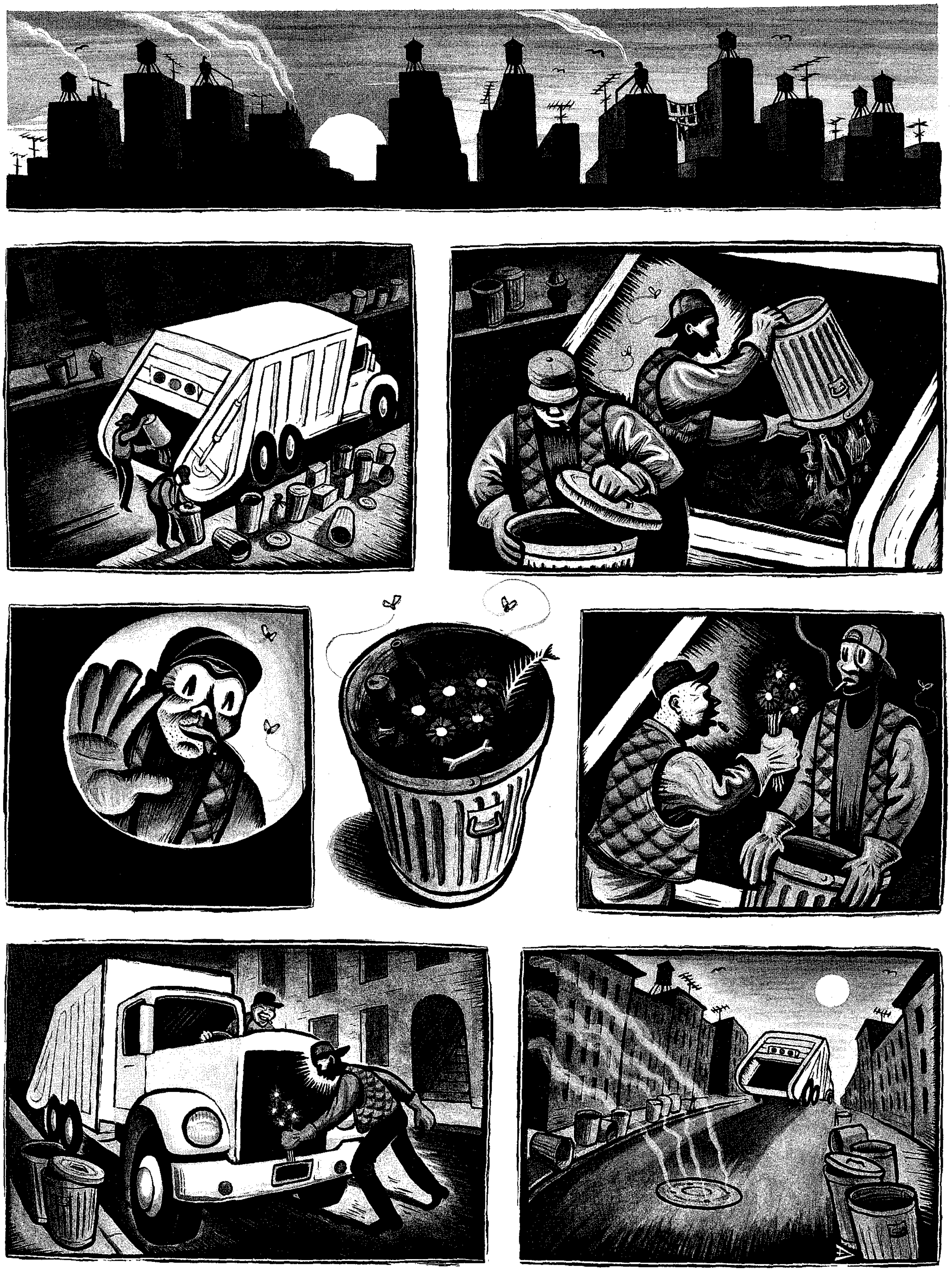


"I am Protestant, went to Protestant schools, and, as I was growing up, there was nothing in the curriculum to suggest I lived in the North of Ireland. I was educated as a Brit. Sometimes I feel British, sometimes I feel Irish. That split is what I am. I listen to the BBC and Irish radio, I read the *Guardian* and the *Irish Times*. Yes, I would like to see a united Ireland, but that's a generation in the future—thanks to the I.R.A. So people from my background— Well, I understand how they feel. But that's changed. So much has changed. Despite what Gerry Adams says, there is little for the republicans to complain about. What the Brits do here is peanuts compared with what the Spanish do to the Basque separatists. The difference between the Hume-Adams agreement and the joint declaration doesn't warrant the loss of a finger, much less of a human life. We have the ability here to produce a Hebron or a Bosnia. Haven't we learned from history how an entire society can go off the rails without warning?"

EVEN though most of Ireland has grown sick of Gerry Adams' posturing, even though he lost his Westminster seat in his own home district in 1992, he is indispensable to the promise of peace in Northern Ireland. And here the comparison with Arafat is justifiable. The "hard men" of the I.R.A., no matter what the particulars of their relationship with Adams, will not put down their rifles and plastic explosives easily. Because of its willingness to carry out brutal acts, the I.R.A. cannot be ignored. This is a hateful thing, but it is a fact, just as it was a fact for Israel that the armed division of the

STORYBOARD • BY ERIC DROOKER

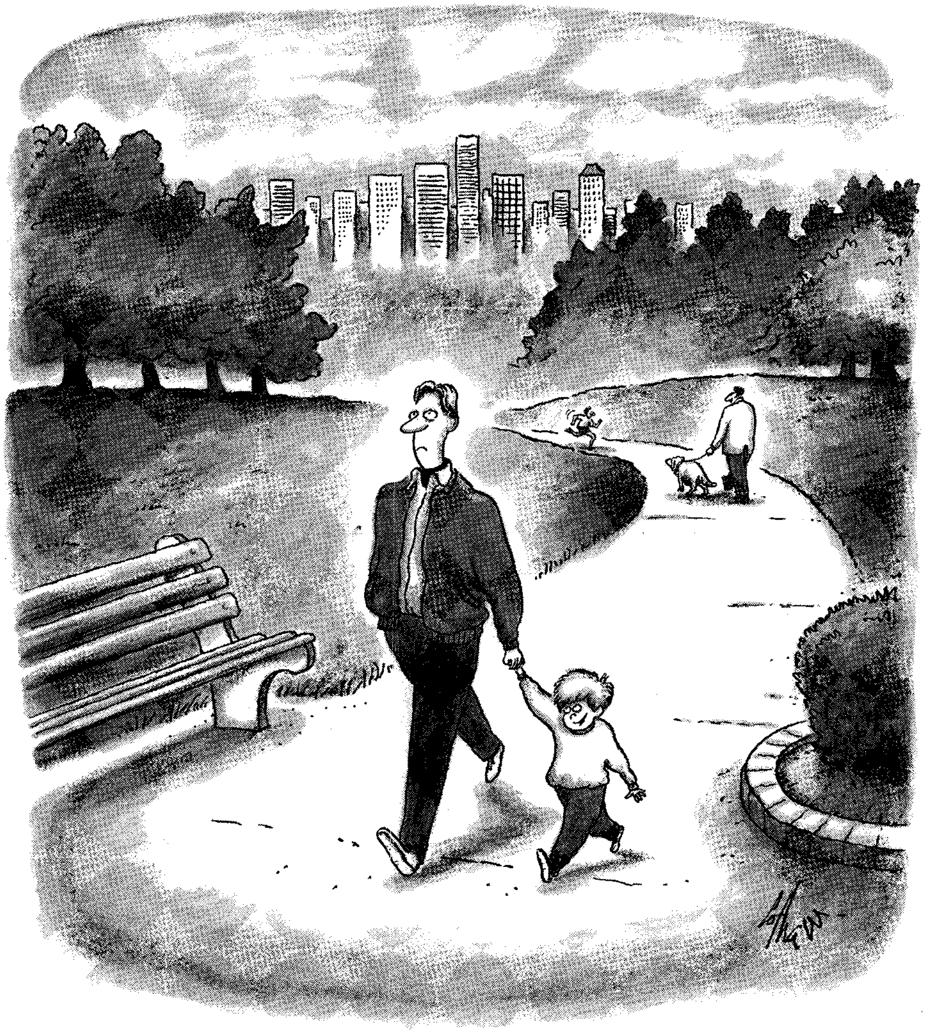
MORNING



P.L.O. could not be wished away. When one considers some of the other personalities at the head of Sinn Fein—Martin MacGuinness, of Londonderry, for one—Adams seems far more flexible, far more capable of making the leap of faith and the compromises necessary to bring about a peace. “If you are trying to make a deal, you try to preserve the person you need to deal with,” Brian Feeney, of the S.D.L.P., said. “If, by some chance, Adams ends up dead in a ditch, who is it you’re going to deal with?”

Adams is the avatar of what is known as the class of ’69, the nationalist leaders who were young men and women and were on the streets when the first riots broke out in Belfast and Londonderry. They were the ones who hurled Molotov cocktails and “Belfast confetti”—street rubble—first at the local police, and then at British soldiers and British armored cars. The movie “In the Name of the Father” has glamorized the Troubles for American audiences, but when people in Belfast talk admiringly about the film, a portrait of the Guildford Four and their unjust imprisonment for I.R.A. bombings, they are often referring specifically to the opening scene, in which the entire West Belfast community acts as an organic whole, protecting one another and raining havoc on the British soldiers.

In Belfast, I sat in on the appeals hearing of one of the Guildford Four, Paul Hill. Although the British overturned the Guildford Four’s conviction for two pub bombings in England (after they had all served fifteen years in jail), Hill’s separate conviction for the killing of a former British soldier, Brian Shaw, still stood. Hill’s lawyer argued that the same series of tainted confessions that led to the Guildford Four’s conviction in the pub bombings had also led to Hill’s conviction in the murder of Shaw. Since leaving jail, Hill has become a media light in Ireland, not only as a member of the Guildford Four but also as the husband of one of Robert and Ethel Kennedy’s daughters, Courtney. The pro-unionist press and much of the British press have seen in Hill an example of radical chic; they have mocked Hill’s claims of innocence and have remarked unfavorably on the looks of Courtney Kennedy. Shaw’s widow was furious when half a dozen Kennedys arrived in Belfast in February for the appeals hearing. “Who are they to come over and try to make an impression?” Maureen Shaw demanded of reporters outside the Chichester Street courts. “Kennedy is just a name. After all, they have had their scandals as well.”

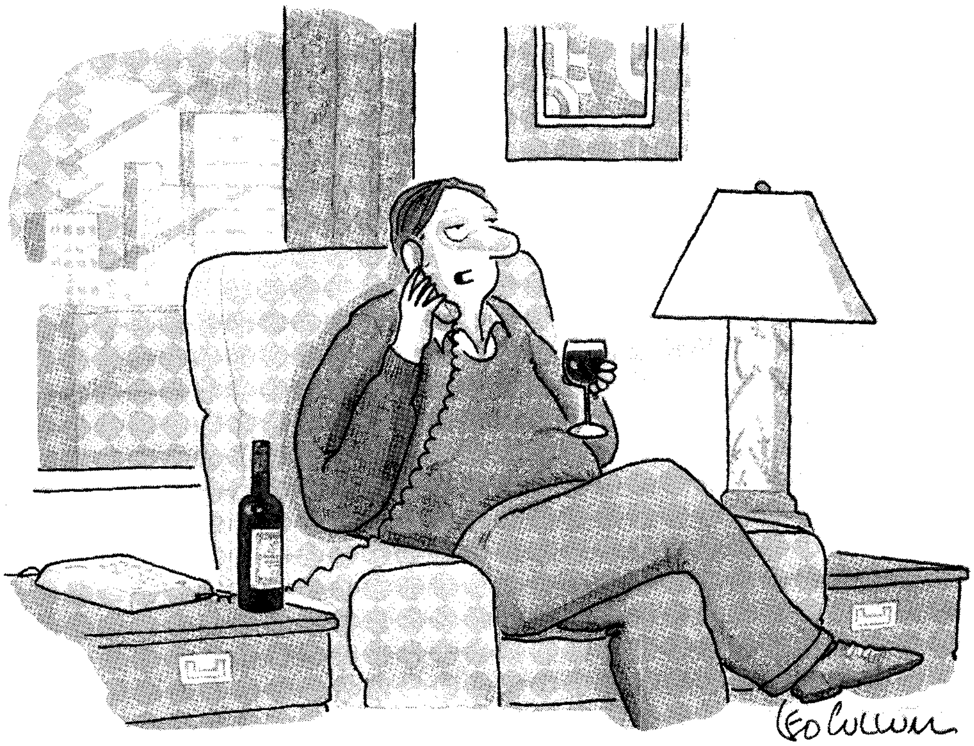


“Dad, if Mom ever has a boyfriend, I hope he’s just like you.”

Hill grew up in West Belfast and came of age at a time when Ian Paisley was leading unionist marchers through the Falls Road district because some republican headquarters had dared show the banned Irish tricolor in the window. Hill and his working-class mates were aghast in 1968 when middle-class students demonstrating for civil rights for Catholics got beaten up by the police. By the time he was a teen-ager, most of his friends were on the streets, rioting.

“I would riot the same way that anyone else in West Belfast would riot,” Hill told me one night after a day of hearings. He and his wife and Ethel Kennedy were staying at a Catholic retreat on the edge of the city. “If I saw someone on the street I knew the British Army wanted, I would tell him, ‘Don’t go around there, the British are around the corner.’ Everybody would do that. Old ladies would stop you on the street and say, ‘Don’t go down that street, son, the soldiers are down there.’ That was the community we came from, and I was an extension of the community. Community didn’t fall apart when the British Army came in. It carried on in that same close-knit way that it always had. That’s how it survived.

“I was certainly never involved in armed resistance. Of the close friends around me, several were, several weren’t. From the class I grew up with in school I can name at least ten people who have been killed, dying valiantly in what they saw as armed struggle. Six or seven others are in prison. And the rest of the class—maybe a third—would have been involved in nothing, but they would have rioted, like the rest of us.”



“Not much—just flushing out my arteries.”

• •

Gerry Adams grew up on roughly the same streets, in a working-class housing project in the Ballymurphy area of West Belfast, and he saw the same riots. But while Hill's family was not especially political, the nationalism of the Adams family was a legacy. His parents' marriage was a republican aristocracy. Adams' father, Gerry, was in the I.R.A., had been shot, and spent time in prison in the forties. His mother, Anne Hannaway, was from a prominent republican family; her father, William Hannaway, was a labor official who knew well two of the patriarchs of the modern nationalist movement—James Connolly and Eamon De Valera. Adams' uncle Dominic Adams was chief of staff of the I.R.A. during the Second World War, and another uncle, Alfie Hannaway, had done time in jail for republican activities.

Adams, like so many republican leaders, is a writer. Under the pseudonym Brownie, he wrote a series of articles for a republican newspaper while he was in jail in the seventies, and under his own name he has written dozens of other articles and many speeches. But far more interesting are his autobiography, “Falls Memories,” and his collection of short stories, “The Street.” The memoir and the stories seem to converge at a certain blarneyish point: the memoir is too misty to be entirely true; the stories are too much like the memoir to be entirely fictional. The two books are much the same, presenting a fable of community, of West Belfast, of the republican striving. Whenever he meets with reporters, Adams is eager to talk earnestly about current politics, rehashing old speeches, but at the very start of “Falls Memories” he means to charm in a more timeless way, evoking a sentimental Belfast in which “the boys” (the I.R.A.) were harmless legends and the old streets were an Arcadia since ripped away by time and urban-renewal plans:

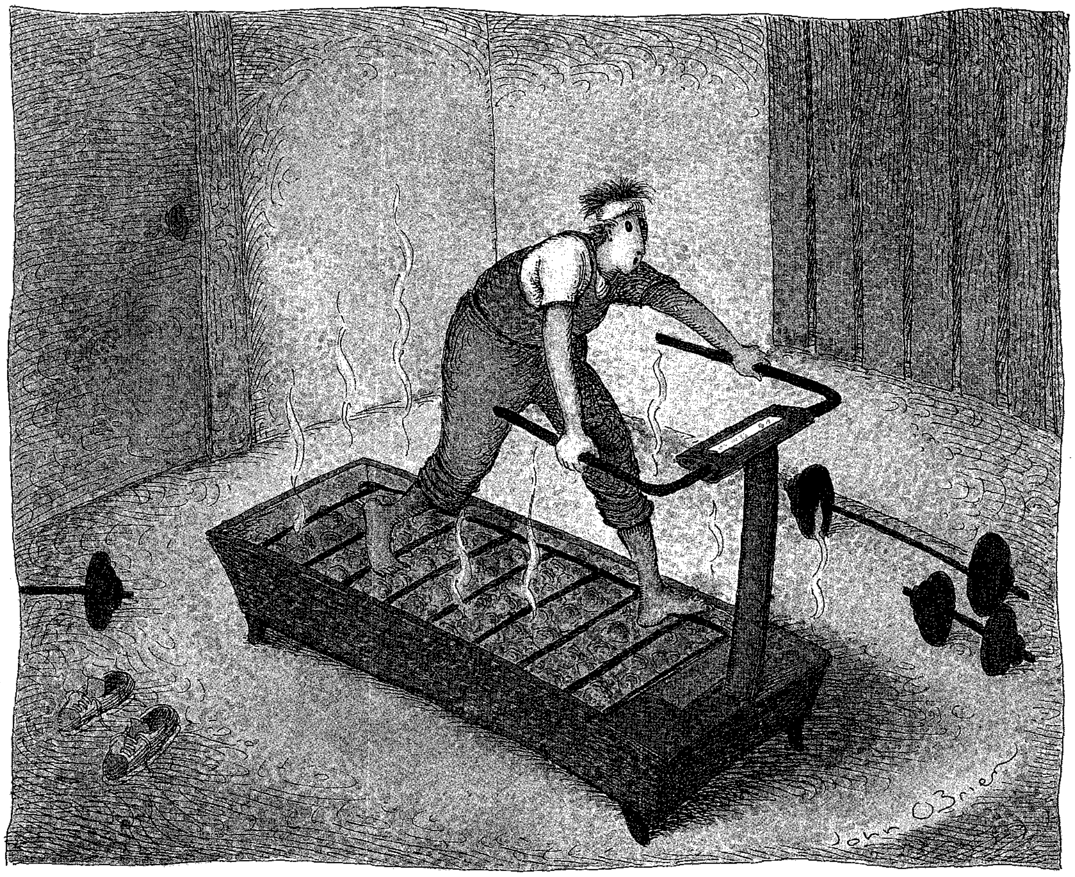
> Here I used to live, spending an uneventful childhood playing rally-oh, kick-the-tin, handball and football, sprinkled with occasional forays against the Getty Street lads who were foolhardy enough to venture into our territory. It appeared to me at the time that our gang had a fearsome reputation, though I suppose by today's standards we weren't really at all fearsome. . . .
>
> I passed Harbinson's corner and memories came flooding back. . . . Whispers about “the boys” or an occasional witness to meetings of pale-faced earnest young men who, we gathered disinterestedly, had just “got out.” Being chased by “the wackey” while fleeing gleefully after hours from Dunville Park or after disturbing old men playing marleys at the shelter. Later still, but with less glee, being pursued by R.U.C. [Royal Ulster Constabulary] riot squads and, later again, by the British Army.

Later on, he writes:

> No doubt, then as now, there were broken marriages, drunken husbands and great poverty but we were unaffected, by and large, by such mundane things. They were nothing to do with us and we were too busy to have anything to do with them. That this would change was inevitable but the loss of innocence which comes with the arrival of maturity was staved off by the many diversions which each new day brought. Our front doors, with their little scrubbed half moons of pavement, the wee streets beyond and the mountains behind were our playground. But now the wee streets are gone and with them whole generations of childhood games and customs.

Adams was one of ten children; he was above average as a student, ambitious but not quite excellent. A childhood acquaintance (too nervous to let me use his name) recalled him “as the kid who was always eager to be Irish, to learn Irish, to play the Irish sports, but he was never tops.” Adams, like Hill, was deeply struck by Paisley's horrifying march through the Falls Road, and the clashes between the unionists and the Catholics that followed. According to a biography by Colm Keena, Adams became deeply political when he was still a teen-ager. In 1964, he joined Sinn Fein, which was outlawed at the time, and later Na Fianna, the Boy Scouts of the republican movement. He went to lectures on British colonialism and on the history of Ireland. In 1967, he was arrested for selling an outlawed newspaper; he was soon released without a trial.

Instead of pursuing his education, Adams went to work as a bartender, first at a mainly Protestant pub, called the Ark Bar, and then at the Duke of York, a downtown pub that was a gathering place for journalists and local politicians. People who used to go to the Duke of York remember Adams as friendly, smart, happy to talk politics. In August of 1969, as the Troubles were



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beginning to boil, he left the pub carrying brown paper bags filled with empty stout bottles—material for petrol bombs.

In "Falls Memories" he sounds rather more like a spectator:

> In 1969 I stood behind a barricade of burning tyres at the corner of Albert Street and watched petrol bombs showering into the mill at Northumberland Street. The enormity of it all frightened me a wee bit as the huge place began to blaze. I didn't really understand then what was burning. I know now. And so undoubtedly did the person who threw the first molotov.

The tone is a wee bit disingenuous. By the mid-sixties, according to Keena, British intelligence sources, and various experts, Adams had become a member of the I.R.A., and by 1969 he was one of the young militants intent on returning to a more uncompromising strategy for the republican movement. He and associates like John Kelly, Joe Cahill, and Martin MacGuinness were urging the republican movement to go "beyond" calls for civil rights and begin a violent destabilization of Northern Ireland. That, these new leaders were convinced, was the only way to attain victory. According to Keena and others, British intelligence sources and former I.R.A. members say that Adams was an ascending star in the I.R.A., and had become the commanding officer of the Second Battalion of the Belfast Brigade by 1971 or 1972, and later attained even higher military and organizational posts.

Adams, though he denies any military role, began a life on the run. "I don't sleep in my own bed," he told me. "I sleep in my own *beds*." In 1971, he married Colette McArdle, who also came from a family with a distinguished republican pedigree. They had a couple of days' honeymoon in Dublin and then it was back to the underground life. In 1972, at the height of the violence, at a time when the British had decided they had the right to intern Northern Irish without trial, Adams was arrested at one of his safe houses, on Harrogate Street, and was imprisoned, though he was never convicted of any crime. It was, and remains, the culture of West Belfast to "do your whack"—serve your prison term—without complaint. As he told the writer Tim Pat Coogan, "you faced the wall for hours at a time, supporting yourself only with your finger tips. You'd be waiting all day for something to happen. Sometimes they came up behind you and dropped a tray with a crash. It would scare the living daylights out of you."

During interrogation, Adams followed the republican code. He gave up no one and nothing. For days, he would not even admit he was in fact Gerry Adams. Like many other prisoners, he was beaten mercilessly. One of the threats the police used was to tell Adams that they would throw him in the back seat of a car and take him on a series of raids of the I.R.A.; that would surely "expose" him as an informer and bring an automatic death sentence from the I.R.A. Adams said only, "I'm sorry, I can't help you." After that period of interrogation, which took place at the Palace Barracks, he was moved to the Maidstone, a British Navy ship docked in East Belfast, and then to a prison camp called Long Kesh, which he refers to as a "concentration camp," but which proved easier than the days of interrogation. He was returned here in 1973. In "Cage Eleven," his collection of prison essays, Adams understands his "whack" at Long Kesh to be part of his legacy:

> Almost twenty years have passed since Long Kesh was opened and through the years it has been a constant element in the lives of all the members of my family. On any one of the many days since then at least one of us has been in there. My father was one of the first to be imprisoned there when he and my Uncle Liam and a couple of my cousins were interned without trial in August 1971 in Belfast Prison and transferred to Long Kesh when it opened to its unwilling guests in the following month. My brother Dominic, who was only six when our father was first interned, has been in the Kesh for the last few years, and this year our Sean endured his first prison Christmas. Our Liam did his

time a few years ago and Paddy A, our eldest brother, has been in and out a few times. That's all the male members of our *clann*—apart from me, of course, and a handful of brothers-in-law and several more cousins.

Those who knew Adams during his stints at Long Kesh remember him as the promoter of discussion sessions—the jailhouse professor who talked for hours about the Cause, about strategy, about Irish history and the perfidy of the British. He was inclined toward Marxist thought in those days and was an avid reader of the prison diaries of Ho Chi Minh.

By 1983, Adams, at the age of thirty-four, had become the president of Sinn Fein and that year was elected to the British Parliament. Even as he justified one ruthless act of terrorism after another, his rhetoric now had to become softer, more statesmanlike. His colleagues, however, were not similarly hamstrung. That year, his friend Martin MacGuinness made clear the strategy of the movement during a meeting of republicans at a graveyard in Londonderry. "We recognize the value and the limitations of electoral success," he said, according to Keena. "We recognize that only disciplined revolutionary armed struggle by the I.R.A. will ever end British rule. . . . Without the I.R.A., we are on our knees. Without the I.R.A., we are slaves." The next year, another friend, Patrick Magee, checked into Room 629 of the Grand Hotel in Brighton, under the pseudonym Roy Walsh, and planted a bomb in the bathroom. A few weeks later, during a Conservative Party conference, the bomb was detonated, killing five people and injuring thirty. The Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was lucky to survive the blast. The world watched as firemen and police sifted through the wreckage with the help of television lights. Despite killing a few politicians and their wives, the I.R.A. felt it had scored only a partial success. The leaders issued the following statement: "Today we were unlucky, but remember, we only have to be lucky once. You will have to be lucky always." Among the people arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment for the bombing was Peter Sherry. Seven months before the blast, Sherry had run for the Dungannon town council—on the Sinn Fein ticket. Adams called the bombing "a blow for democracy."

BEHIND A CLOUD

I

When my father stumbled over gassy corpses
And challenged the shadow of himself on duckboards,
A field of turnips had filled with German helmets
And under his feet eyes were looking at the moon.

II

When I heard the storm petrel that walks on tiptoe
Over the waves, pattering the surface, purring
And hiccuping, the moon had gone behind a cloud
And changed the sea into a field full of haycocks.

—MICHAEL LONGLEY

On a Sunday evening, I went to hear Ian Paisley preach at the Martyrs' Memorial Church, on Ravenhill Road. Paisley has been an international presence—the enraged face of the loyalist Protestants—for nearly thirty years. He is known as the Big Man, and bears a distinct resemblance to a tribal leader. His power is physical—more particularly, vocal. He is enormous, and is possessed of the vocal equipment that, if he were more graceful, would allow him to sing Wagner. The structure of his church, it seems, has been designed around the power of that presence. Paisley preaches from an immense pulpit. He is so high in the air that to see him from the front rows you must tilt your head back as if you were in a planetarium. His tone, even at sixty-eight, is a marvel: a great rumbling; the sound of terror, it seemed to me—the voice that sentences the damned. Paisley is a Southern-style evangelical, a friend of Bob Jones and a frequent visitor to Bob Jones University, which awarded him an honorary doctorate; only certain rolls and gutturals in his accent make it plain that he lives in a different part of the world. Flanked by the Union Jack and standing near a sign that read "We Preach Christ Crucified," Paisley slashed on about the evils of "popery," about "treachery" and "treason in government," and that was just the opening blessing. In his sermon he said, "I have survived! And I will continue to survive because I speak the truth! And the truth shall set you free!" The organist played in the style of the skating rink, and the people sang their hymns in registers shrill and adamant.

Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and James Molyneaux's Ulster Unionist Party are the dominant Protestant parties—they hold a majority of Northern Ireland's seats in Westminster—and neither man has any inclination to transcend the old rejectionist politics. Both believe deeply that a united Ireland would invite the hegemony of Rome, the obliteration of Protestant culture. No speech of theirs embodies better the paranoid spirit of their politics than the closing lines of Kipling's poem "Ulster, 1912":

> We know when all is said,
> We perish if we yield.
>
> Believe, we dare not boast,
> Believe, we do not fear—
> We stand to pay the cost
> In all that men hold dear.
> What answer from the North?
> One Law, one Land, one Throne.
> If England drive us forth
> We shall not fall alone!

In public-relations terms, the Protestants are hopeless. Paisley and Molyneaux feel no compulsion to soften their language. They feel under assault not only from militant republicans but from all sides: from the S.D.L.P., from Dublin, from London, from the Pope of Rome. They have no de Klerk, no politician who seems capable of breaking the old mold. What makes the unionist stand even fiercer is the growing sense that the British departure from Northern Ireland is coming, and soon. Their illusion of permanence is all but gone.

The I.R.A. has no monopoly on terror. There have been Protestant paramilitaries in the region for centuries: the Hearts of Oak, the Whiteboys, the Peep o' Day Boys date back to the seventeenth century. In the nineteen-seventies, the Ulster Defense Association, which is the biggest of the modern groups along with the Ulster Volunteer Force, would claim credit for acts of terror using an alias that the Hearts of Oak employed centuries ago: Captain Black. But, despite their long tradition, the Protestant militaries have scarcely tried to conceal the fact that they have organized themselves and behaved as mirrors of the I.R.A. They strive for the republicans' sophistication, and they have army councils and codes of secrecy. Just as the I.R.A. has got its arms from Libya, the Soviet Union, and the Bronx, the Protestants have built stockpiles courtesy of South Africa. And, like the I.R.A., the Protestant paramilitaries keep themselves functioning by running any number of racketeering schemes. In Belfast, the Protestants are not known to be as well schooled ideologically as their enemy, but lately they have been killing more people, and that's something.

One afternoon, I drove out to the Protestant suburb of Lisburn to meet with Ray Smallwoods. In 1981, Smallwoods took part in the U.D.A.'s attempted assassination of Bernadette and Michael McAliskey. When Bernadette McAliskey was still Bernadette Devlin, she was an internationally known figure in the civil-rights movement, and she has become one of the most militant republican voices. One January morning in 1981, while Smallwoods waited outside in a car, two accomplices of his broke into the McAliskey home, in the Derryloughan townland, with sledgehammers and shot Bernadette eight times and Michael four times in front of their three young children. Both McAliskeys survived, and the three-member U.D.A. hit team was convicted of attempted murder. Later, Bernadette McAliskey said that the assassination attempt could have occurred only with the collusion of the British military in the area; hers was a familiar charge of U.D.A.-British collaboration, and one made convincingly over the years not only by republicans but by a number of British politicians and investigators as well.

Smallwoods had given me his address in Lisburn as 21-A Market Place: headquarters of the tiny Ulster Democratic Party. "Can't miss it," he said. It turned out to be an unmarked door between an ice-cream parlor and a chip shop. A surveillance camera above the door scanned the sidewalk. A guy no more than twenty years old, a few tattoos on his arms, came running down the stairs. After I explained who I was and what my business was, he blinked once slowly, turned, and ran back up the stairs. I followed. He led me into a freezing room furnished with a couple of plastic chairs.

"Sit here," he said. "Wait."

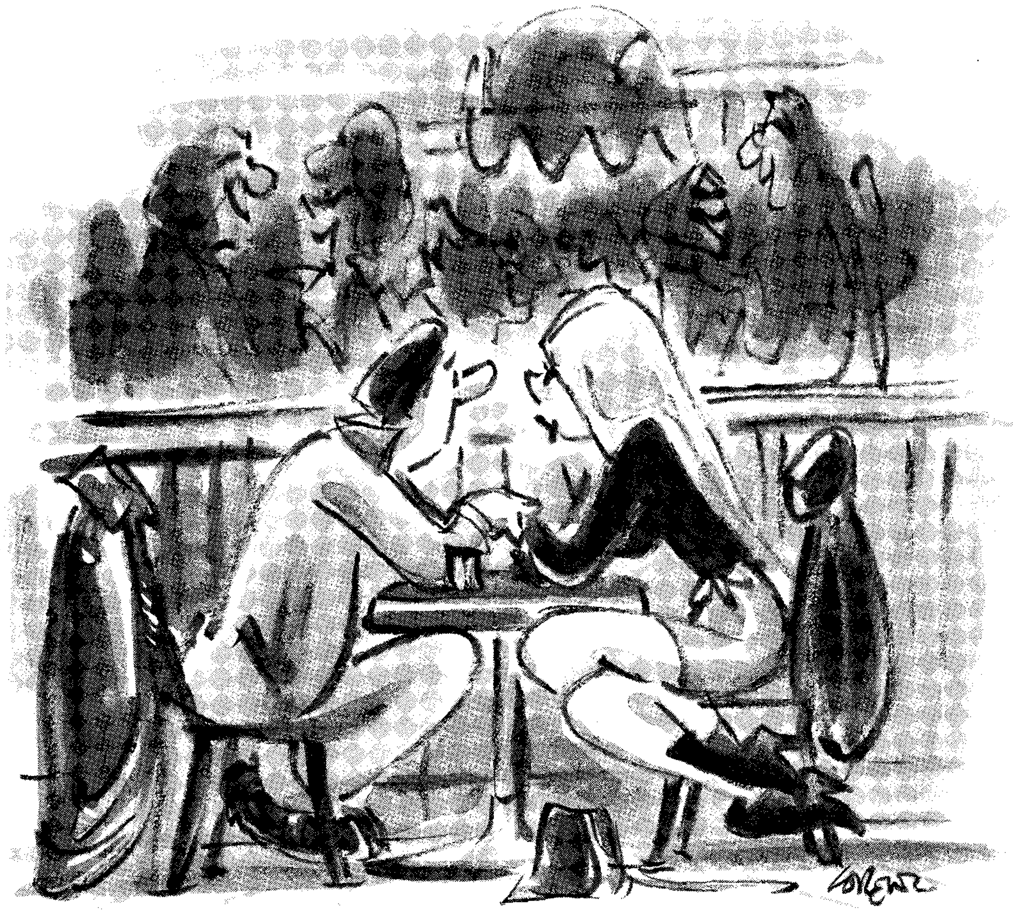
I waited an hour and a half. Clearly, this side of the war did not have the same sense of stroking the press that the republicans had.

"Here," another U.D.P. kid said. "Read this." He handed me a couple of magazines, *New Ulster Defender* and *Captive Verses*. They were filled with loyalist agitprop, greetings to prisoners, and wretched poetry. There were several pictures of armed men wearing ski masks.

Finally, Smallwoods arrived, and announced that he was hungry. I bought him lunch at a pub nearby, and we talked. Smallwoods is forty-four and grew up in Londonderry. He is short and trim, surprisingly calm in argument, and, like Adams, well spoken. In fact, in my time in Belfast I came to be amazed at just how articulate everyone was; even kids whose business it was to shatter knee-

Edward Koren

"Speaking of entitlement, what ever happened to the forty-hour week?"



"I do love you, Ross. But I'm not ready to hyphenate yet."

• •

caps had the gift of fluent speech.

"Look," Smallwoods began. "I won't say I was U.F.F."—Ulster Freedom Fighters—"but I was an active U.D.A. man. I was never convicted for being U.F.F." I told him that this was a distinction of interest to the law courts of Belfast, but that it was probably beside the point, at this late date, for him to argue his case as a man of tranquil nature.

"Well, fair enough," he agreed.

Smallwoods said that he was one of eight children and grew up in a two-bedroom prefab bungalow in a decent section of Londonderry. "We were the have-nots surrounded by the haves and a nice park," he said. "If you could, you moved away. Some got a job and the rest joined the Army. I joined the U.D.A. instead. Lots moved to England. I didn't. You see, I've always had a political bug in my head. While everyone was into sports, I was into politics—and the opposite sex, of course."

Smallwoods was working in a textile mill when the Troubles began, and he was deeply offended at hearing the protests of the republican demonstrators. "The world from Day One was being told that we, the Protestants, were guilty of persecuting Catholics," he said. "I just got sick of being told that the people who were looting and bombing and rioting were innocent people and I was persecuting them. The only way to strike back was to adopt their tactics. What put me over the line was seeing these people portrayed as victims."

I asked how he came to join the Protestant paramilitaries.

"How did I join? One of my mates comes to me and says to me there's a meeting at some hall. This was 1972. There were twenty-two people there. In Lisburn. And we were there to form a battalion for the Ulster Defense Association. There was a time in the early days when the U.D.A. put thousands of men on the streets. Most of those did not cross the line into the Ulster Freedom Fighters, the armed resistance. I was a vigilante. Well, that's an emotive word. Let's say I patrolled the streets.

"We've felt total betrayal by Britain, from 1969 on. They've tried to find accommodation with the nationalists and the Republic of Ireland, just so they wouldn't be called by the world a colonial power. Instead, they should have fought in their own corner for our rights." Even the main unionist leaders are not to be trusted. Molyneaux "is a well-intentioned waste of space" and "the same goes for Paisley," Smallwoods said. "We are under threat. We have no one to look after us. The government deals with Sinn Fein, the I.R.A., and Dublin. Our politicians are no good. From 1985 on, there has been an almost total alienation of the Protestant working class."

Smallwoods did not pretend to be innocent of his assault on the McAliskeys. "I believed I'd done the right thing at the time," he said. "Please understand the context. The world believed that my community was guilty of hatred and repression. They were telling our children that we had no future in this country. The decision to go after McAliskey was an organizational decision."

Was he chosen for the plot?

"Let's say I was a 'volunteer.' The way it worked was that there was a decision to carry out an operation, and 'Do you want in on it?' Suffice to say that nobody had to coax me. It was all very clear and self-explanatory. The whole thing speaks for itself. There was a particular situation in the country then, and you responded to the social conditions you found yourself in. We exist in society. The situation was not of my making."

Smallwoods was convicted, and sentenced to fifteen years at Maze Prison, outside Belfast. He served eight. Like others I had talked to, Smallwoods told me of his great personal transformation in prison, how he came to see the "complications" in violence, and how he is now aloof from the outlawed paramilitary groups. To say otherwise, of course, would put him in jail once more. "But look," he was quick to add. "I'm not a pacifist. If my country were to be absorbed into another against the wishes of the majority—well, we have the right to self-defense."

"What if the Provisional I.R.A. finally renounced violence?" I asked. "Wouldn't that be time for the U.D.A. and the U.V.F. to stop as well?"

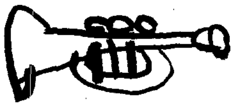
"The loyalist paramilitaries will not stop, will never stop, so long as Dublin has an involvement in this country," Smallwoods said. "If the Provos stop, you'll get the Protestant violence shifted against Dublin. It will go on. Don't worry."

In the British press, especially, republican militants, and even their Protestant opposites, have been portrayed as homicidal maniacs, psychotic butchers who relish bloodshed. Ever since the Troubles began, a Belfast psychiatrist named Alec Lyons has been studying its psychological impact, including making a comparative study of domestic and political killers. He has seen victims and offenders in his office in Belfast, in Maze Prison, and at the local hospital, and he has published a number of papers on the subject in medical and legal journals. He has concluded that, while the domestic killer often is a psychopath, the political killer is, in his terms, normal.

"The two types are different in nearly every respect," Dr. Lyons told me one morning at his office. "From the psychological aspect, the politicians may use the word 'psychopath' to describe the political murderer, but these people are not psychopaths, by and large. A psychopath enjoys his aggression, he does not learn by his past. Certain political murderers were like this. For example, the Shankill Butchers"—a notorious Protestant gang that was involved in at least a dozen gruesome murders. "But usually the people I saw were stable, without drug or alcohol problems, without histories of psychiatric problems. The domestic murders were at close range, maybe with a knife, a hammer. They tend to be at night, often drunken acts. The political murders are different: bombs, snipers, at a distance. They feel no remorse. They believe in their purpose, what they see as the 'justice' of their actions. Afterward, they rarely suffer from stress disorders. It is just entirely different."

Dr. Lyons spoke for quite a while in this vein and then, unprompted, veered into an analysis-at-a-distance of the republican leadership.

"I don't find it hard to understand a person like Gerry Adams. He's been the leader of a republican movement that's been successful. And if you've attained fifty per cent of your goals with a certain method—namely, violence—you are reluctant to give it up. Before 1969, this was a Protestant state, for Protestant people. The Protestants have lost their hold on the government, their police force. They are unsure of power now. Civil-rights abuses—inequality in housing, gerrymandering—all that's been done away with. The point is that Gerry Adams has achieved a lot by violence and it is naïve to expect him to give it up. He's an intelligent man, a good leader. The I.R.A.'s propaganda side is very good. He's got international support and sympathy that the Protestants do not have."



Did that mean that he supported the Adams strategy?

"I said I understood the strategy and the psychology," Dr. Lyons said. "But I can't support violence. I have probably seen ten thousand victims over the years—a vast number of them. I see the usual symptoms: fear, anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks, replays stimulated by television or for no reason at all, irritability, a lack of concentration. And much worse. How can I support the violence? I am picking up the pieces every day."

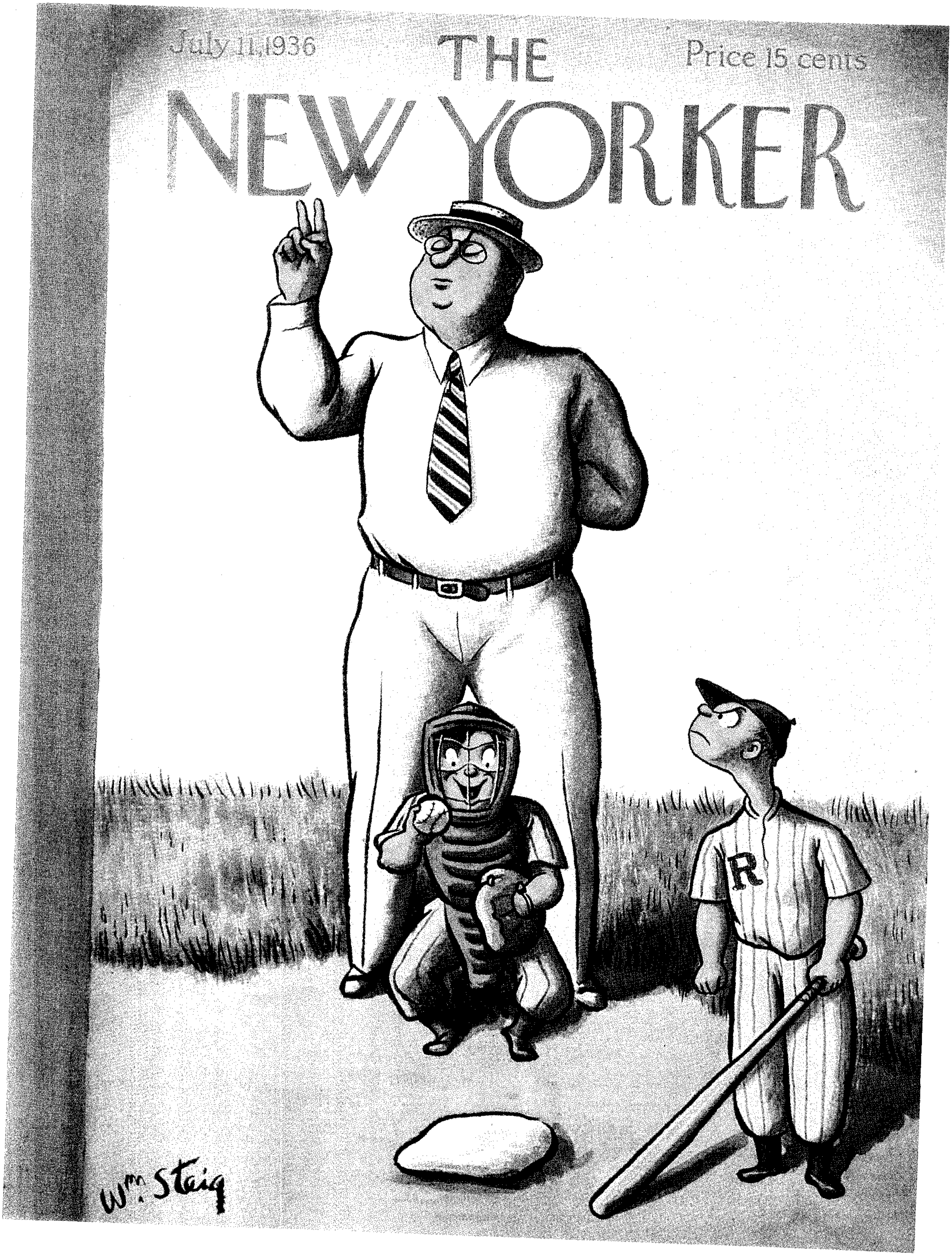
If the political violence of Northern Ireland rarely warrants more than a couple of paragraphs in the newspapers, the more common "punishment shootings" get even fewer. Both republican and unionist paramilitaries say they can no longer trust the police to do their jobs. Although the Royal Ulster Constabulary claims to have a high rate of arrests and convictions for common street crime (it is higher than in American cities, certainly), the I.R.A. and the U.D.A. long ago decided to take on the job themselves.

Geoffrey Maxwell, a Protestant in his thirties who was a community organizer in North Belfast before coming to work at FAIT, grew up in Lisburn when the infamous (and since murdered) U.D.A. leader John McMichael was a formidable presence. Maxwell is intimately familiar with Belfast and the suburbs around it, and one morning at the FAIT offices he described the world of the paramilitaries—young thugs operating with all the insouciance and brutality of the Mob fifty years ago. In the poorer sections of Belfast and Londonderry, and in many of the towns and villages of Northern Ireland, members of the I.R.A. or the U.D.A. act as cops, enforcers, racketeers, and thugs. And, what is more, for young kids in those areas, joining a paramilitary group is a career path, a way out of unemployment.

"These kids look around, and the only people with power, money, and prestige are in the paramilitary groups," Maxwell said. "You've grown up with this sense of siege. If you are Protestant, you grow up believing that all Catholics support the I.R.A. and want you to come to harm. At thirteen or fourteen, in school, you'll write 'The Red Hand' or 'U.D.A.' or 'U.D.F.' on your schoolbooks. The same in the Catholic areas, where you'll begin to write 'I.R.A.' and 'Brits Out' on the walls.

"You never see the other side until it affects you directly. As kids in Protestant Lisburn, we never heard that there were these Prod paramilitaries, the Shankill Butchers, going around killing Catholics. We had selective propaganda. The U.D.A. recruiting was easy, because for a long time it was a legal organization. You could recruit openly at school. When you reached sixteen or so, it was clear: either you were in the organization or you were crossing the organization. Extreme loyalists tried to ally themselves with Israel or South Africa. That's the way they see themselves, under siege. Paisley thinks he's Daniel in the den of the lion. He believes God gave them Ulster, God's little acre, and the Pope is the Antichrist."

The paramilitaries on both sides expend endless labor on their self-appointed policing operations. By com-


July 11, 1936
THE NEW YORKER
Price 15 cents
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Wm. Steig

parison, political assassinations are far less frequent and far less strenuous. The parents of a neighborhood "joyrider"—a car thief—might get a visit from the local I.R.A. or U.D.A. man. They are given a warning that their child should cease his larcenies or expect the paramilitaries to take matters into their own hands. If the paramilitaries decide that the next step is required, someone will be found the next morning severely beaten, or with a bullet in his knee. The kneecappings sometimes come by surprise but often by *appointment.* Sometimes the I.R.A., in particular, will inform the offender that he has a day or two to leave the country. If he is wise, the offender is on the next ferry to Liverpool.

"The I.R.A. says that kneecapping and exiling are forms of justice it has to use because police have no right to do the job, but really it is a method of social control," Maxwell said. "The process is not always so orderly. Punishments are usually random. Sinn Fein will tell you that there is a set list—that this offense means a beating or that means a knee. It's not true. A few guys in a bar decide what to do, and they do it—beat someone with iron bars or planks or baseball bats, or chase the guy out of the country. The message to the community is 'We do what we want.' In a dispute between a husband and a wife, the woman's father may be in the paramilitaries, and so 'justice' will come down that way. There is a lot of talk about the Troubles, but the biggest war is the war between the paramilitaries and their own communities. In 1993, the I.R.A. pumped more bullets into Irish Catholics than they did into the Army.

"The loyalists are the same way, but, as far as kneecappings are concerned, they tend to make a bit more of a mess than the Provos. But the Provos of late have been more sinister—more multiple shootings, both knees, both elbows, and so on. You might get a six-pack—both knees, the ankles, the elbows. They used to shoot people in public, and the victim would be seen and taken to a hospital. Now the victim is taken farther away, and after he is shot he loses a lot of blood before anyone finds him. Or they'll make sure to shoot the victim behind the knee, straight into the popliteal artery, and the blood flow is tremendous. We had someone in Derry in 1993 who was shot in both legs. No ambulance was called for a while, and both legs were amputated and he died a few days later. He was a Catholic shot by the Provos. They accused him of being a sex fiend. He had no criminal record. There was a guy in the I.P.L.O."—the Irish People's Liberation Organization, which is out of business now—"shot by the I.R.A. They shot him in both ankles, both hands, both knees, both thighs, both elbows: a tenner. Or they might have you bend over and shoot you in the spine. That's a fifty-fifty.

"There are also punishment beatings. Very often with baseball bats. Or they'll use planks with nails sticking out, iron bars, hammers. In Newry, a guy was beaten with a fire axe. Usually, informers get worse. They call it a 'kneecapping in the head.' "

Maxwell went on to say, "You see, this is not the sort of thing you hear much about abroad. Even in South Belfast, on the Malone Road, they don't really know that this is the day-to-day level of intimidation. People are more likely to dismiss it. Even in the areas affected, people will say, 'Well, the victim deserved it.' Saying that makes it more palatable. You can live with that. To know the person was really innocent, that is harder to digest.

"It just never ends. Guys have been kneecapped three or four times and they keep on joyriding. It becomes a challenge. They might drive up to the I.R.A. leader's house and beep the horn and give him the finger. Look, they get kneecapped not because they stole but because they stole without permission from the paramilitaries. The paramilitaries have no conscience. On the same night the I.R.A. told a woman to take better hold of her eight-year-old after he was throwing fireworks in the street, they drove a two-thousand-pound bomb to High Street."

It would be comforting to think that FAIT is a growing organization and that it is making great inroads in North-

"Who can we call?"

ern Ireland. Neither is the case. Its annual budget is roughly forty-five thousand dollars, and its main success has been in focussing the attention of the media and human-rights groups on the extrapolitical abuses of the paramilitaries. Until recently, groups such as Amnesty International paid attention almost exclusively to the abuses of governments against their own people. If a victim comes to FAIT for help, the group will offer counselling and the possibility of publicity, but it will not try to negotiate a settlement with a paramilitary group.

"For intimidation to be successful, people have to be isolated, and we try to break the level of intimidation," Maxwell said. "We try to get the person out of immediate danger. But we refuse to deal with the paramilitaries. It's an issue of human rights. People have a right to the presumption of innocence, to a free trial. Human rights are not up for negotiation. The paramilitaries have no moral or political mandate. We don't want to legitimate them or their right to judgment."

BLOODY HAND

Your man, says the Man, *will walk into the bar like this*—here his fingers
Mimic a pair of legs, one stiff at the knee—*so you'll know exactly*
What to do. He sticks a finger to his head. Pretend it's child's play—
The hand might be a horse's mouth, a rabbit or a dog. Five handclaps.
Walls have ears: the shadows you throw are the shadows you try to throw off.

I snuffed out the candle between finger and thumb. Was it the left hand
Hacked off at the wrist and thrown to the shores of Ulster? Did Ulster
Exist? Or the Right Hand of God, saying *Stop* to this and *No* to that?
My thumb is the hammer of a gun. The thumb goes up. The thumb goes down.

—Ciaran Carson
(Belfast, 1987)

The strangest figure working alongside Maxwell at FAIT is a young man named Henry Robinson. In his youth, Robinson was a paramilitary, a kneecapper. "Now I'm a vegetarian," he told me over lunch. "I learned not to eat meat in jail. It's cruel to animals." Robinson is from a Catholic suburb, Downpatrick, and is one of eighteen children. The family lived in a three-bedroom house, "so it was a wee bit crowded at times," he said. His father drove buses and ambulances. He himself was a poor student—"at the very bottom of the slowest classes"—and left school at sixteen.

"I couldn't wait to start killing British soldiers," he said. "I was in Catholic schools, where we'd recite the names of the thirty-two counties of Ireland (counting the six of the North) as indoctrination. You got the impression in school that Cromwell was still roaming the streets doing evil things to the Irish, or something. When the riots started, the Catholics felt under attack, and so did the Protestants. A lot of recruiting went on. It would be a long time before I'd ever think that sending British soldiers home in coffins was not the whole answer.

"When I got into the whole thing, I was working as a barman, and it was the secretness of the paramilitaries that was the appeal. You know—boys as kids like meeting in secret and talking about secret things. Now, with the paramilitaries it was the same thing, only they were talking about sinister things. I joined up with something called the Official I.R.A.—a splinter group that had a more socialist-type tinge to its nationalism. It still exists, but off on the fringe, really.

"I shot a guy who'd been I.R.A. He'd just been released from prison. There'd been a fight between him and a guy from our group. He was throwing his weight around. Our group met and decided the shooting would take place. I'd already been shown how to use a gun in some kitchen somewhere. It was a pretty simple thing. You don't have to be a genius to learn how to fire a pistol into some guy's face. I was nineteen at the time—my first time. I had a .38 revolver. It was a really strange feeling, a rush. A lot of adrenaline goes through your body. It's a macho thing, a feeling of utter control. That's what guns are all about, I guess—the feeling that people are going to do what you say. That's how you advance your argument, sticking a gun at someone.

"So there he was, standing at the bottom of the hill on Stream Street. It was the middle of the day. I had a mask on, and there was another guy with me. The guy was with two of his mates. I walked up to him and said I was with the Irish Republican Army. When his mates saw the gun, they scattered. I shot him three times, hit him in both legs. If I'd been told to kill him, I'd have done it. Paramilitaries are like fundamentalists. They don't question, they just do it.

"I ran for our ghetto, but a guy I knew in school saw me. I had my mask off by that time. (I didn't say I was a bright paramilitary, did I?) And so he told the police. I'm glad he did, too, because if he hadn't I'd be in Hell by now."

A few weeks ago, Sinn Fein sponsored so-called Peace Commission hearings at the Conway Mill. A panel of cheerful, nodding Sinn Fein leaders listened all day to a series of individuals and groups who had come to plead their case: republicans, unionists, community workers, academics. The press was invited, and that was very much the point. Sinn Fein, we were to believe, has a humane side. The peace side. But neither the press nor the participants seemed much deluded. A young woman, a Protestant minister, came to speak, and she refused to give her name. "If I were to use my name, I'd be in trouble," she told me afterward. Her hands were vibrating. "It's not considered exactly squeaky clean to be with Sinn Fein," she said. "I'm petrified who could see me here and who could know."

The most astonishing moment of the day came when a spindly old gentleman, a surgeon, arrived to give his own testimony. He was William Rutherford, retired after nearly twenty years as an emergency-room physician at the Royal Victoria Hospital, in West Belfast. One of his patients, back in 1984, was Gerry Adams, who had been shot by a team of Ulster Freedom Fighters after leaving a Belfast court. One of the bullets that hit Adams barely missed his spine. His wounds were so severe that it can be fairly said that Dr. Rutherford, a Protestant, saved his life.

Adams showed up at the Peace Commission for a few minutes, but rushed off before his rescuer spoke. He might have done well to stay. Like the psychiatrist Dr. Lyons, Dr. Rutherford had been picking up the pieces all his professional life, and he spoke with a quiet passion of the need for the most obvious and difficult things: the laying down of arms; an agreement that has the consent and coöperation of all sides.

A few days later, I drove out to Dr. Rutherford's house, in a prosperous development in South Belfast. He is still healthy at seventy-two. He described the varieties of gore he had seen in his career.

"I saw my first bullet wound in 1969, when I was already quite an experienced doctor," he said. "I was stunned. Disbelief. I knew that this did not happen in Belfast. I'd never even seen a gunshot wound. It was as if a red-hot needle had bored through the flesh, so small and yet . . . significant. It was so definite, so real, and yet something inside me said, 'No, this cannot be.' The corrupting effect of armed struggle and warfare! Sure, people had robbed banks and stores before the Troubles started, but they were quite happy to do it without shooting anybody. But now, even if the political struggle fades from the scene, we'll be left with a Belfast of guns.

"When it started, you had people on either side getting worked up. The poor Protestants had so little, but if the Catholics, who had even less, grabbed their share what would they, the Prods, be left with? That was the conflict. At first, the mass of injuries was cuts, bruises, broken bones, broken noses. Then the guns came out. The next great phase was the bombings in pubs, in streets, bombs left in the boots of cars. There was a period when we used to get these all the time. From one bomb you could get a hundred people coming through the door. The I.R.A. was largely the initiator at that point, but sometimes the Prods would do it and pretend the I.R.A. had done it. In the early stages, the bombs were mostly homemade explosives, so you were seeing a lot of people torn up by flying glass. It depended on your proximity to the bomb. They lost legs. Sometimes, when they were killed they were blown to bits, and you couldn't even tell how many corpses you were dealing with, exactly. It was strange, but when you are working as a professional in these circumstances you have got technical problems to overcome. You are taking care of blood loss, making sure you are setting up the right I.V. fluids, alerting the right people to do this and that.

"I remember people started coming in in 1970 tarred and feathered—an old American pastime, I believe. When that happened, we would call the hospital painters in to advise us. They were the only ones who understood what substances we were dealing with and how to clean them off. And then later in the nineteen-seventies we started getting the kneecappings. A lot of the shootings were around the kneecap but did not destroy the kneecap. How much disability depended on precisely what damage had been done, and this may have been linked to the 'crime' involved. I never knew whether the people involved had any knowledge of anatomy, so they could calibrate the degrees of punishment. I suppose they did. But the point is, you have a lot of arteries, veins, and nerves behind the knee. Our surgeons eventually got very good at repairing these injuries. We learned to create a new artery to replace areas where arteries had been torn apart by bullet wounds. There was the 'breeze-blocking'—dropping construction blocks on someone's back or limbs or head. And there were 'romper rooms' where a person would be taken to be 'breeze-blocked.' Oh, God, it was awful. Sometimes the paramilitary group might leave a calling card on the flesh by 'writing' their initials using electrical terminals.

"I remember the day Gerry Adams was shot. I think we got a message before he was actually wheeled in that he was coming. It was within a couple of minutes of City Hall where he was shot. I remember coming into the resuscitation room taking charge of his case. I remember putting the chest drain into his chest, because there was a lot of bleeding around the lungs, and the blood can exert a lot of pressure down on the lung. That made the breathing easier. I remember thinking how his speeches had needled me, got under my skin in the most annoying sense. It seemed to me there was a lot of bitterness in him, though he was possessed of great powers of logic. I suppose I even blamed him, in a way, for escalating things. I was unsure if he was a politician or really a paramilitary commander, but he was definitely a stir-it-up sort of figure, one that kept it all going. I was born and bred on the other side of the fence from Adams, but when I was looking after him I treated him like any other patient. I never had to struggle with my emotions. As a doctor, if you tried to empathize with your patients you'd go berserk. We have to concentrate.

"I wrote to Gerry Adams about a month ago, because I think that now he may really want peace and want politics. I can very well understand that some people on the military end of the armed struggle find it very difficult to stop. These are people whose lives have little meaning outside the war. These are people whose money and power and status and wherewithal are dependent on the status quo. I think Gerry Adams does not want the republican movement to split over this issue. He'd like to achieve more through direct politics, but he knows the risks that have been taken and what there is to be lost for the people who have taken up arms. He wants to be sure he has a good deal before he persuades them.

"I am an unusual man, a Protestant who wants a united Ireland. But the Catholics must understand the Protestants and their fear. The fear is the fear of death, of communal death. If there were an externally imposed united Ireland within, say, eighteen months, a violent war would be likely. But if it is my kind of united Ireland people must be prepared to spend decades. If they want it in a year or two, they'll reap the whirlwind."

I WAS able to see Adams alone the day I was to leave Belfast for London. The press office set the time and the place—noon, at No. 51-55 Falls Road, the Sinn Fein press center. It seemed a propitious time to ask the old questions once more. The I.R.A. had lobbed mortar shells into Heathrow Airport. The shells, as it turned out, did not explode, and there were no injuries. What there was was fear, uncertainty, confusion; in short, the I.R.A., without killing anyone, had accomplished what it set out to do. It was once more destabilizing Britain—the same strategy that Adams and the class of '69 had worked out at the start.

Once I was buzzed into the Sinn Fein building, a friendly greeter led me into a small waiting room. A dour-looking woman sat next to me as her daughter played "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" on a plastic pennywhistle. They were from the neighborhood and had come by for advice. A large percentage of the Falls Road area is on the dole—in fact, I.R.A. members make it something of a point of honor to draw weekly from the trough of England—and Sinn Fein acts as a surrogate community adviser. In the waiting room, I found forms for free health care and information on arranging for a funeral if you could not afford one. On the walls were posters and plaques in honor of I.R.A. men who had been killed in the line of duty—a commemoration that seemed to give the lie to the public position that Sinn Fein and the I.R.A. were wholly separate. Here, inside, no one bothered with the pretense.

I was summoned upstairs to meet Adams. We sat together in a room not much bigger than an elevator: it had just enough space for two folding chairs. Adams was, as usual, in jeans and a tweed jacket, and was friendly, as always, on a first-name basis from the start. He had, in fact, a friendly way of saying very little: "As I have said many times, David," and so on. His talk about his own life was as sweet and as remote as "Falls Memories"; his answers to political questions were little tape loops he had reeled off a thousand times. His rhetoric is still very much rooted in the sixties: he spoke of the need for a "people's revolution," and of his vision of a more or less socialist, "non-sexist" united Ireland. He spoke of the "regrettable" punishment shootings, the need to sympathize with the "legitimate" worries of the Protestant majority. And, while he denied once more any links to or influence on I.R.A. operations, he admitted that it was "very important that anyone in leadership shouldn't get ahead of the pace."

Adams is a seductive performer. One cannot imagine that the republican movement and its terrorist army possess his better. But his seductions are limited. When I asked him what he meant by "socialist" and "economic democracy," he began with "I don't know" and wandered off into a dismal soliloquy, the sort of schoolboy ramble that usually ends with "Sweden," or words to that effect. The truth is that after an hour with Adams you begin to see that under his considerable powers as a front man, under his veneer of learning, he is a secret. Or a protector of secrets. His talent is his ability to be the appealing face of a repellent organization, an army that has soldiers but meagre popular support.

After my meeting with Adams, I flew from Belfast to London. At Heathrow Airport, I learned that the I.R.A. had shelled the runway for the second time in a week (with duds again). When I returned to Heathrow, two days later, to catch a flight to New York, there was a third shelling. To restart negotiations, the British demanded a permanent ceasefire. The I.R.A. said that it would grant only a three-day stay. It did, and then, on April 9th, the attacks began again in Belfast. This is what Gerry Adams calls the peace campaign. ♦

SHOWCASE

IMPASSIONED

BY BRENDAN LEMON

STEPHEN SONDHEIM'S new musical "Passion" has set off a lot of table talk since it began previewing last month at Broadway's Plymouth Theatre, and it is certain to provoke a lot more before it opens, on May 9th. Audiences are being asked to consider a rather operatic story—Fosca, a neurotic, unattractive woman in mid-nineteenth-century Italy, fixates upon Giorgio, a handsome cavalry captain—and contemplate its obsessive, unironic course attentively for nearly two hours (no intermission). While the show itself has been dividing opinion (an expected part of any Sondheim preview process), the performance of its female lead, Donna Murphy, has brought uniform acclaim. Not since Holly Hunter in "The Piano"—which also featured an obsessed Romantic heroine with pulled-back hair—has an actress so excited serious audiences.

Murphy wasn't obvious casting for Fosca. She's done her share of drama, but New York audiences know her as a more lighthearted musical performer—as the smart-ass band singer in the wartime romp "Song of Singapore," and as the gracious whore in Michael John LaChiusa's very contemporary "Hello Again."

"The musical roles are a little misleading," Murphy says. "I tend to gravitate to the dark side of a character, even if it's not what the audience sees. Some directors have had problems with that." To research Fosca, she watched Ettore Scola's 1981 movie "Passione d'Amore," which had ignited Sondheim's interest, and read the 1869 novel "Fosca," by Iginio Tarchetti, which Sondheim and his book writer and director, James Lapine, used as their primary source. She even consulted Freud and Breuer. "Such an obsessed personality is not easy for musical audiences to take," Murphy acknowledges. "But I don't want to soften her to make her palatable. Her pain isn't a moment. She lives there." ♦

Photographs overleaf

BY RICHARD AVEDON

Donna Murphy in Stephen Sondheim's "Passion," opening next month on Broadway.

Photographed by Richard Avedon in New York City, April 5, 1994.

FICTION

HEY, JOE

BY BEN NEIHART

JOE was newly sixteen. He had the rosy aspect, and the swagger, and the skinny arms, and the bad reputation. He was a brooder, a magazine reader, a swaying dancer at mellow, jazzy rap parties. He kept his hair cut short like the other smoked-out newbies at Metairie Park Country Day, and the only shoes he wore were black suède Pumas.

School had just let out for the Labor Day weekend, so Joe was home, changing clothes, in a hurry to be gone before his mother returned from work. He hated to leave her alone on a Friday night, with her books and the cell phone. He hated the actual leave-taking most of all—her quick kiss, the sound of the front door's bolt lock when he closed it behind him. He wished she didn't spend so much time by herself. Why didn't she hang with her old friends? She was always working—at Tulane Medical Center, in the fund-raising office, asking doctors and scientists and presidents of Corporation Whatever for money. "It's gonna suck the life right out of me," she sometimes joked. Joe hated her saying that, because he could see that it was true; in the past year, it seemed, skin and muscle hung more loosely on her frame, and on her face, even though she did exercises in the high-ceilinged ballroom of the New Orleans Athletic Center, downtown.

He wandered about the living room, looking for his glasses, which he wore only at home. They were hidden somewhere beneath the spoils of his mom's latest shopping spree. On the floor were neat piles of new compact disks, hardcover novels by European women with killer black hairdos, and shoeboxes. Slung over the furniture were silk blouses, palazzo pants in four shades of cream, and bras and panties, all of them with price tags still attached.

"And the value of this showcase is . . ." Joe said, and then he hurried down the hall to the bathroom.

In his underwear, he crouched over the bathroom sink. It was his pond, shell-shaped, with separate faucets for hot and cold water. The mirror was steamproof, and flattering; it put your face at a remove, so you weren't right on top of yourself as you did your routine. He squirted some Dial onto a washcloth and worked up a lather to freshen his underarms. He rubbed on some deodorant next, then washed his face and brushed his teeth.

He went into his mom's bedroom. As always, it was neatly set up for when she would come home this evening. The king-size bed was made; a pair of jeans and an immaculate white T-shirt and fresh panties lay on the pillow; the blinds were closed to keep the room cool in the late-summer sunlight. Joe liked the feel of the wood floor under his bare feet. He hopped onto the doctor's-office scale beside the dresser. One hundred twenty pounds. Good, he told himself, lean and portable.

He pulled his mom's door shut on his way to his own bedroom, the smallest room of the house—even smaller than the bathroom. He liked the fact that when he lay down to sleep he could touch the walls on either side of his bed. On weekend mornings, his mom would come into the room to wake him up early so they could spend the morning together in the back yard, sitting on the stone benches in her little rock garden. Between them, they'd drink a pitcher of orange juice, and then Joe would go inside to fix enormous tumblers of iced tea, to clear the thickness from their throats. It was as if they hadn't missed each other in the comings and goings of the week. Long, contented silences; bare feet stretching in the dewy grass; the sun pumping higher into the sky.

Now Joe pulled the front off one of his waist-high Sony speakers, which had been hollowed out to hold his business, the top-shelf weed he imported from Gainesville and sold to his friends. He unrolled a zip-lock freezer bag and took a deep breath of the sweet, fearsome herb. He took a pinch to roll a quick joint. Time to give fashion, he thought. He lit up and collapsed onto his bed. He didn't have to turn on his stereo; music presented itself, as if it had lain dormant in the joint: "Nickel bag, a nickel bag . . ."

As he got stoned, he looked at his hands, which were covered with scars. His legs and feet were, too. Each scar was the proof of a mountain-bike tumble, or, in one case, a skid across the coral beach on Fitzroy Island in the Great Barrier Reef, where they had gone last Christmas—Joe, his mom, and his dad, just before he died. They had pushed Daddy's wheelchair to the edge of the Coral Sea. "A sea like green milk," Daddy had said. Joe and his mom hurtled past the breaking waves and dove head on, grasping handfuls of water, racing, floating. When they were finished, they stood beside Daddy, dripping onto his sunburned legs and shoulders. "Oh," he said. "Oh, does that feel good."

NOW Joe heard the mail truck stop outside. Friday was a magazine day. He drew himself out of bed, sprayed some Lysol around. He locked up the house and galloped down the driveway. The mailbox was rooted in a pile of pink, round stones. Joe kicked them with his toe. He left the bills and letters in the box and pulled out the new *Vogue*. He sat down on the slope of curb where his driveway met the street. He'd wait here, he decided, for his ride to the Quarter, where it was his habit to spend Friday nights.

He set the magazine on his bare legs and took stock of the cover. The model was the angel of Joe's life. Her name was Linda, and the cattish regard of her eyes could pull you out of a funk. Joe had been following her career for five years now. In interviews, Linda said that all she had ever wanted to be was a model; she didn't want to be an actress or a singer or a politician, and she didn't want to talk about her charities or whatever, and she talked to her mom every day, and they talked about modelling, because that was Linda's job.

On this cover, Linda sat in the grass; she wore a grape velvet dress that was tight in the bodice. The lightest strands of her hair—the color of Coke in a glass full of melting ice—caught the sun, reminding Joe of the old Dutch society paintings that he had admired in his "World of Art: The Netherlands" class. In those paintings the background was usually dark—an inky, enamel cloud—to set off the lighter wires of the subject's hair and her lucent, honeycomb ruff and her knot of blue pearls.

He looked into Linda's eyes and tried to imitate her smile. He pressed his knees together and palmed the hair on his legs as if smoothing a skirt. Then he noticed the small type near the bottom of the cover: "LINDA EVANGELISTA IN LOVE." He turned to the table of contents. He felt as if the boundary between his fingers and the page were disintegrating. There! He paged through the dark-hued Steven Meisel photographs, and then he stopped. A two-page spread of Linda, wearing a gray cropped sweater. She lay beneath her boyfriend, Kyle, the actor from "Twin Peaks," on a blanket that was suffused with morning sunlight. They were kissing, openmouthed. Her hand—with polished, short nails—gently held the side of his neck.

"Work it, Linda," Joe said happily, and then he lay back on the driveway, holding the magazine to his chest. Music billowed from the house next door, where a former friend of his, Al Theim, lived—a Michael Bolton number, sung as if the singer had taken an Uplift enema. Joe howled along in a fake, sour-bellied voice: "Nothing cures a broken heart like time, love, and tenderness."

It was just like Al Theim to broadcast that kind of shit. Joe couldn't believe he'd once been in love with the guy. They used to spend afternoons together listening to Al's older brother's leftover records from the early eighties: A Flock of Seagulls, Visage, Ultravox. The singers wore makeup, and their hair was swept up in whoopie curls and banglets, but the songs, Joe thought, were some songs. Longing vocals on top of wet, sparkly keyboards: "Ultraviolet, radio lights, telecommunication . . ."

One warm October evening, almost four years earlier, Joe's mom had taken Joe and Al to Scream in the Dark, a haunted house set up in two gaping, connected barns, across the Mississippi, in Algiers. Christian kids dressed from top to bottom in hunter-orange directed the parking, took admission money, and made you sign an injury-release form. It felt like summer: it was seventy-four degrees out in the early evening. Joe and Al wore matching, tartan-plaid, flimsy cotton shorts. Even their thin, hairless legs matched.

"What kind of movie is this?" Joe's mom asked, bending over a picnic table to sign her form. Despite Joe's warning, she'd got herself up in a long black dress.

Joe went first, on his hands and knees into the entrance tunnel. Al followed, and then Joe's mom, her knees bound up in the dress. At the end of the tunnel was a ladder. Joe climbed to the second level, a pitch-dark room of indeterminate size, at the far end of which flashed the strobe-lit entrance to the next room. He ventured forward; Al and Mom followed.

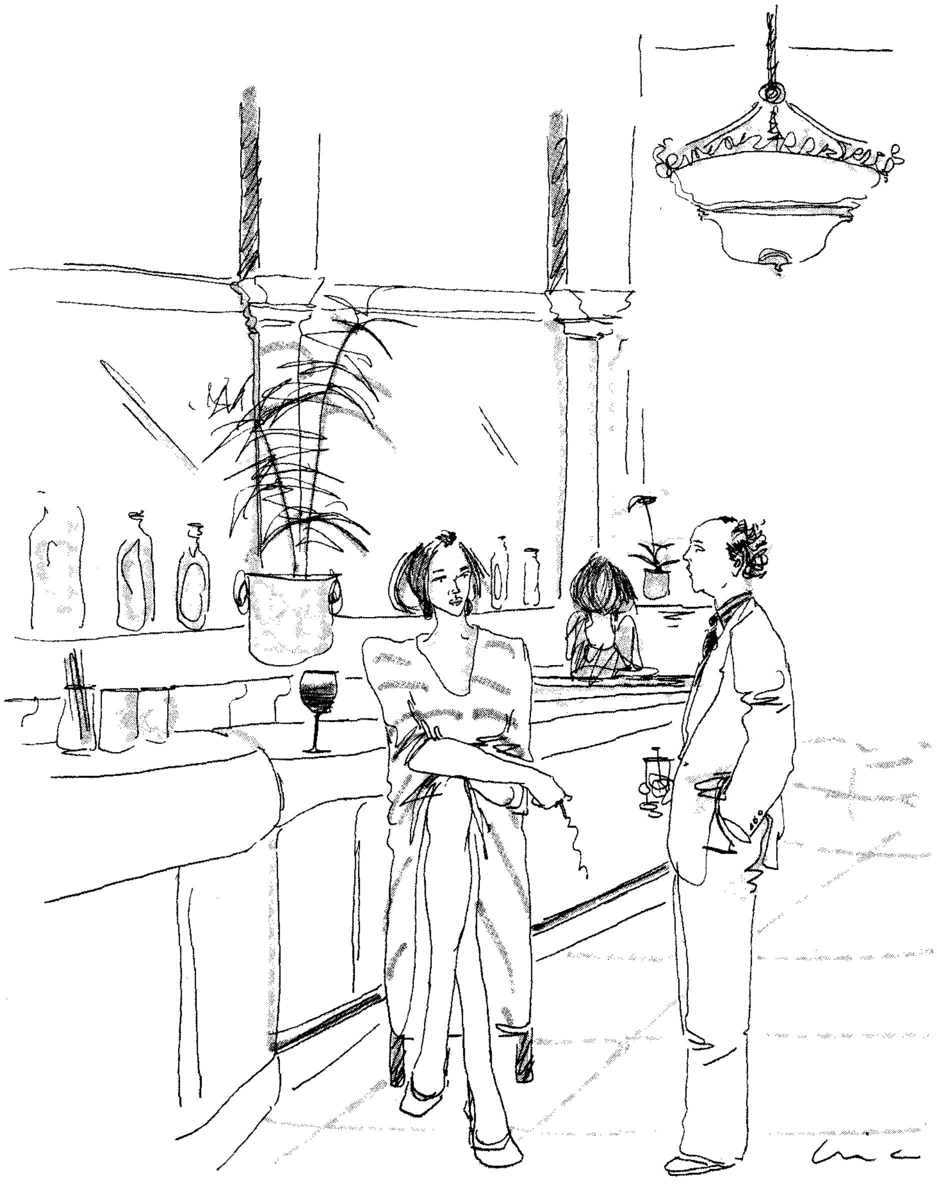
"I thought it was going to be a movie," Mom said, and they all laughed. Then, in the dark, someone touched Joe's shoulder.

He shouted, "Al! That's not funny."

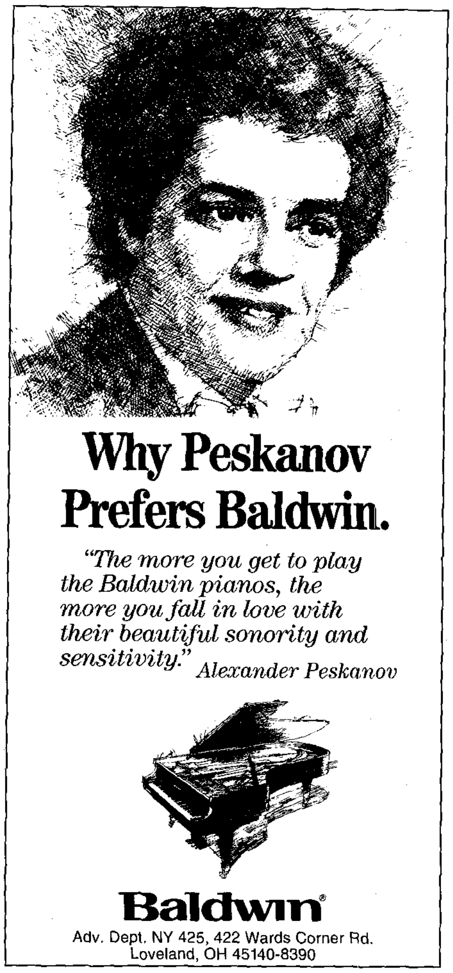
"I didn't do anything," Al whispered.

"Someone touched me," Mom said. "Run!"

Joe hurried through the lightlessness, his forearms braced in front of him, into the following room. The floor and walls



"I thought I had the flu last weekend, but it was my hedge fund."



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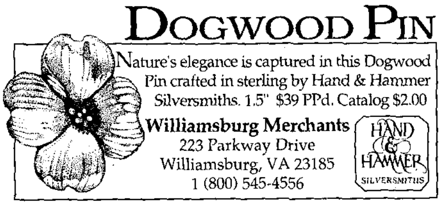

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and ceiling were painted in a black-and-white checkerboard pattern; the strobe light worked its distortions. Joe looked over his shoulder at his mom and laughed. She chanced a smile. The kids in front of him were trying to get to the other side of the room, but they couldn't walk straight. The floor was a sharp pyramid, and you slid backward as you got closer to the peak. Joe looked over his shoulder. The wall behind his mother was moving. There was a man in a checkerboard costume, face painted white, sliding along the wall. He reached out to touch her. Joe took her hand and dragged her into the next room.

Here, in a hyped-up jungle, where the recorded sounds of squawking birds and giggling monkeys played deafeningly, Joe's mom disappeared; she had found the emergency exit and run out. Joe could hear her shouting, "I thought it was a movie!" The floor was made of foam rubber, and covered with rolling, shin-high hurdles. Al took Joe's hand. A gorilla watched them from behind a vivid palm tree, the outline of which was glowing purple.

Al could distinguish the hurdles from the flat stretches, but Joe, at first, couldn't; he perceived, instead, only the fluorescent foliage painted on the foam. Al shouted "Jump!" at each hurdle.

There was nothing like holding Al's warm, sweaty hand. At what looked to be the final hurdle, Joe made himself fall, and pulled Al with him. They wriggled to the wall, Joe's head propped on the foam hurdle, Al's head on Joe's chest. They watched the jumble of flapping shirts and jeans, listened to the screams and laughter.

Al touched Joe's face. "I like you," he said.

"I like you more than that," Joe said.

"How much?"

Their voices stayed in the space between their faces, and Joe found himself close to tears. "More than I like anyone," he said. "All day in school, I think about you." Birds called. The gorilla moved closer, then paused.

"Man, that makes me feel good," Al said. "Say it again."

And then there had been a kiss.

Now, spread out on his driveway, Joe shuddered and shut his eyes tight. The memory had returned with unwelcome carnal immediacy. Al Theim hadn't meant a word he said, Joe thought. Al Theim was just some wack softhearted guy who blew a few sentences out of his mouth. And so were the handful of guys he'd met since. Bullshitters. Maybe I'm not trying hard enough, he thought. Maybe tonight I'll talk to every person I see on Decatur Street, just bust up to them on the sidewalk and introduce myself. He shifted his head on its bed of grass clippings and loose gravel, and then he fell asleep.

He awoke to the whoop of an approaching car horn. He cracked open his eyes and just barely lifted his head to see who it was. A top-dollar car, reflecting sunlight, so he couldn't make out its color. Friends? Family? He dropped his head back and shut his eyes.

The car pulled onto the driveway beside him, purred for a moment, and then went silent.

The door opened, and his mother said, "Wake up, I'm home."

"Hey," Joe said.

She walked around the car, the soles of her low heels scratching the macadam. She came to his spot beside the mailbox and crouched down next to him. "Where you going tonight?"

"Out with friends."

"O.K., I won't ask." She settled onto her knees and smoothed her lemony cotton lap.

"I *said* out with friends."

"I *said* I won't ask."

Joe struggled to sit, propping himself up on one elbow. He looked at his mother's shoes, at her hose and her dress, at her knuckly hands and freckled arms—the freckles from long hours of weekend sunbathing. He knew why she liked the heat beating down on her, emptying her thoughts. He appreciated as much as she did the sensation of spilling a glass of iced tea down your throat as you lay, nearly still, on a chair in your own back yard.

Joe could tell that she was tired. It was Friday. It had been a long week. He put his hand on the side of her face. Her skin was soft, and cold from the car's A.C. "Stay with me a minute," he said. "Let's hang out for a minute."

She tilted her head to the side, catching his hand between her cheek and shoulder and holding it there. "You talk," she said. "I'd be so grateful." ♦

THE CRITICS

BOOKS

A BALZAC OF THE CAMERA

BY ANTHONY LANE

Atget Paris
(Hazan/Gingko; $55)

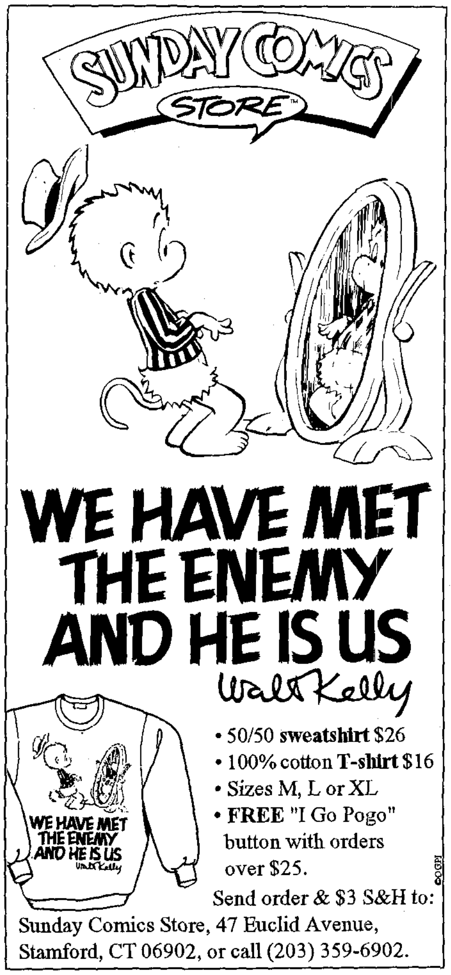
“Paris will no longer see that strange silhouette, that energetic face, that figure out of Balzac, always dressed in an immense threadbare overcoat, crowned with an old round hat, his hands eaten away by acids.” Who is this decrepit character? To us he sounds like something out of Beckett rather than Balzac. He is in fact Eugène Atget, the French photographer, who died in 1927, at the age of seventy; those mournful words come from a letter by his friend André Calmettes. They sound suspiciously like mythmaking, born of love and loyalty, but in a way they don’t go far enough. The real sadness was not that Paris would no longer see Atget but that, without Atget, nobody could really see Paris.

His life began in spirited fashion, and slowly descended into the uneventful and the quietly creative. Born in 1857, and orphaned young, he went to sea as a cabin boy, travelling as far as Uruguay; back in France, he was drafted into the Army, then took to the boards as a provincial player of bit parts. In 1886, he met an actress, Valentine Delafosse Compagnon, who was to become his lifelong mistress. In 1888, he started to take pictures; within ten years, he had settled on his lifework—to capture Paris in photographs. His prey was more elusive than you might expect—not the proud, orderly streets planned by Haussmann but all that was ignored in that grand design: the arcana of the old city, its brothels and doorways and dirty fountains, the stages on which its daily drama was played out. Atget stopped to absorb the detail that others failed to notice, but he couldn’t have cared less about seeing the sights. Not once, in almost forty years behind a camera, did he point it at the Eiffel Tower.

Eugène Atget, photographed by Berenice Abbott in Paris, 1927.

BERENICE ABBOTT/COMMERCE GRAPHICS LTD., INC.

In all, he took over ten thousand pictures. The best array of them can be found in the four-volume edition published between 1981 and 1985 by the Museum of Modern Art. Now there is another option, a single, softback, brick-thick volume entitled “Atget Paris.” There is a curious sense of relief, of being in civilized hands, as you open the book, but also a sense of excitement as you start to flick through, and eight hundred and forty monochrome images whir past your eyes to produce, if only for a few seconds, the juddering, crackly film of a lost yet living place. There is no mistaking an Atget photograph, but no easy means of describing it, either; he seems to impose no style, and yet no one else, faced with the same scene, could ever have arrived at the same likeness. He is known, sometimes dismissively, for his conjuring of atmosphere; this book directs you to his mastery of line as well. (It’s worth recalling that Walker Evans and Ansel Adams were among Atget’s earliest fans.) The edges of his buildings are pure and hard, unbothered by background fuss, but as you look into the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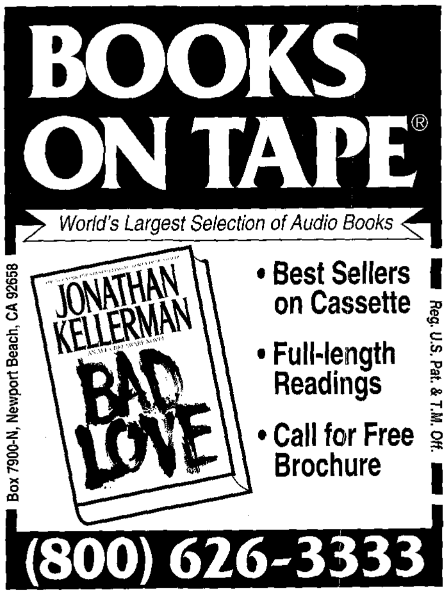
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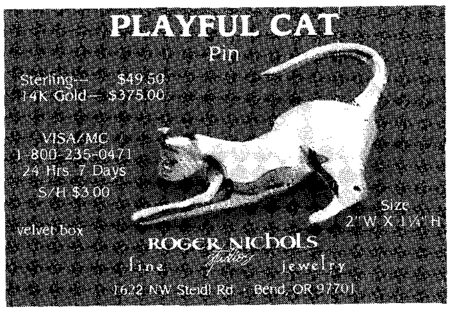
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distance the light relaxes into a feathery haze. You are left with the extraordinary sensation that perspective is a matter not only of space but of time: in front of your eyes it is high noon, but day seems to be breaking at the end of every street.

This is not simply a trick of exposure; in later life, Atget would rise and photograph at dawn, following in the peaceful footsteps of his countryman Corot. He was, by reputation, even less ostentatious than his subjects; according to Calmettes, he dined on milk, bread, and sugar lumps for twenty years. Ten thousand snaps would be easy for someone with a Nikon and a motor drive; harder for a small guy with a camera the size of a typewriter and a stack of glass-plate negatives, eighteen centimetres by twenty-four. Atget bore the whole burden, more than forty pounds of it, around on his back: deeper shades of Beckett. In 1927, the American photographer Berenice Abbott, who had befriended the aging Atget and did much to spread the news of his genius, persuaded him to sit for her: with fraying collar and absent stare, he looks like a weary undertaker, or a hobo just in off the street, resting awhile, maintaining the last of his dignity. No wonder he has come to stand for the artist as self-denying loner—a type that always reaches out to us with an urgency not shared by more socially stable contemporaries.

But we need to tread warily. Recent research has dented the legend of Atget the trampish hermit, preferring to stress the patient craftsman with a keen eye for business. Both versions, perhaps, are part of the truth, just as an Atget photograph is not only a private, plangent act of contemplation but also a product of the exhaustive French desire for encyclopedic record. He sold in bulk to public institutions, including the Monuments Historiques and the Bibliothèque Nationale. "Atget Paris" divides his work geographically, by *quartier*; he himself was even more practical, compiling his pictures of door knockers, shop signs, or wheeled vehicles into albums. People would buy them and copy the designs. One step up, artists such as Derain, Utrillo, and Vlaminck would use his urban scenes for topographical purposes, as a prosaic take-off point for their own flights of invention.

It is from here that the curious history of Atget's reputation really starts. He had few imitators but more interpreters than he would have cared to contemplate. His first and most fruitful contact—you could never call it a collaboration—was with the Surrealists, notably with Man Ray, who lived down the street from Atget and would stop by to truffle for appropriate images. Ray was quick to notice how suggestive the photographs' tranquillity could be; when four of them were reproduced in "La Révolution Surréaliste," in 1926, they looked perfectly at home. There is something tense and poised in the decorum of an Atget composition: the camera tends to be tucked down low on its tripod, affording a broad and vulnerable angle, rather than the tight command of a lofted viewpoint. It seems to be lying in wait for surprises, knowing that they will come but unsure of what form they will take. Atget prepares the ground, in other words, for De Chirico; both are obsessed with the dramatic promise of the underpopulated, although Atget holds off from the sharpened sidelighting with which De Chirico, the ultimate foreshadower, likes to set a scene. The paintings rumble with the thunder of coming catastrophe; the photographs feel more mildly fated, as if the worst that could possibly happen were a postman's tumble from his bicycle, or the baker dropping a loaf. Inside the houses, it is the same story, with echoing drawing rooms ready to receive: Atget gave one of his albums the snappy title "Artistic, Picturesque, and Bourgeois Parisian Interiors from the Beginning of the Twentieth Century." Bourgeois life had an artistry all its own, delicate and unremarkable rather than grand; the photographer was democratic in his vision but far from revolutionary. He was there to commemorate, not to explode.

This spirit of acquiescence, however, can be taken too far. "A Vision of Paris," for instance, a tasteful publication of 1963, coupled scenes by Atget with extracts from Proust. It was not the happy marriage you might expect; for one thing, it reminded you just how deeply "À la Recherche" breathed the air of the *beau monde*, whereas Atget was a man of the *monde*, pure and simple. But something else about the book was off key: the attempt to dress Atget up as an expert in nostalgia and, by printing the images in sepia, turn him into a kind of minor-league Proust who longed to clutch at the past. You can see the temptation: no one can look at his shots of the Tuileries, or the Arcadian vistas that he found at Versailles, without a sympathetic pang.

Le Dôme, Boulevard Montparnasse. June, 1925.

COURTESY OF BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

At the other extreme, there is Molly Nesbit's 1992 study, "Atget's Seven Albums," which takes its epigraph from the second stanza of "The Waste Land": "What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow / Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man, / You cannot say, or guess, for you know only / A heap of broken images . . ." It's a tall order. Can she really fasten that glimpse of desiccation and decay to Atget's placid portraits of Saint-Germain or the Quartier de Bonne-Nouvelle? His lens never flinched from clutter, of course—from the crust of grime on a stately façade, from unreadable posters peeling off a wall—but the gaze that he levelled at it was clean, wholly immune to the many-angled, tight-nerved scrutiny of the modernists. Molly Nesbit, however, is only just warming up. By page 99, she is giving those bourgeois interiors a piece of her mind: "The document was fetishized in the intermediate spaces that bound the signs together and held the functional ambiguity in place." We can only wonder what M. Atget, elderly resident of the Rue Campagne-Première, would have felt about being so efficiently deconstructed.

Proust or Eliot? Surrealism or fetishization? Atget the businessman or Atget the bum? Every cast of thought, every emotional strategy, it seems, has remade him in its own image. The man himself, when he was alive, was a magnet for rumor, and the work has been overrun ever since. We can't resist it; we dream of a life for ourselves on those wide boulevards. That is one reason his work has barely dated: you can fill it with Frenchness—any kind you like, from whatever period, according to taste. It beckons you into its unexceptional landscapes, its well-stocked but crowdless shops, and your gaze is free to wander, because there's no one else around. The later tradition of Cartier-Bresson and Doisneau, great photographers who caught their country on the wing, has somehow fared less well: the charm remains intact, but all those spontaneous gestures tend to crumble into snatches of social history. Atget, by contrast, knows all about the uncertain half-life of happiness and the forgettable crisis, so he doesn't run off to look for them. When Parisians do step into the light for him, it is never the limelight; they go about their business—the waiter, the Gypsy, people hawking baskets or looking at the newly constructed Métro—while he goes about his, and the photograph marks the point of intersection. The point often broadens into a blur, as the people waft like ghosts through his long, sunlit, tolerant exposures. The tail of a dog becomes more of an open fan than a straight line, showing the precise arc of its wag.

Compared with more luxurious editions, "Atget Paris" is flat and fuzzy in its standards of reproduction, but it is also blessed with one great advantage: you can pick it up and walk around Paris and see where Atget has been. The dog is long gone, but the tail never stops. What shocks the casual stroller these days is not so much what has changed in the course of a violent century as what has stayed the same: you can still buy wigs at the hairdresser on the Boulevard de Strasbourg, and the bones displayed in a shop front on the Rue de l'École-de-Médecine, recorded with morose wit by Atget in the last year of his life, remain there today, although the skeleton has dwindled to a pair of skulls. Someone must have changed that awning on the Rue de Buci a dozen times, but the scalloped fringe keeps the shape that it had in 1900. This may be the most lyrical city in the world, but the lyricism is resilient, neither vaporous nor flashy, and that is why Atget's views of it refuse to fade. He didn't pickle the city in formaldehyde or turn it into a museum; he became its guardian angel, sticking around to watch it grow. The Paris revealed here lies somewhere between Baedeker and Baudelaire, a guided tour to one man's imagination. You keep looking up from page to street, expecting to see that worn old coat pass by. ♦

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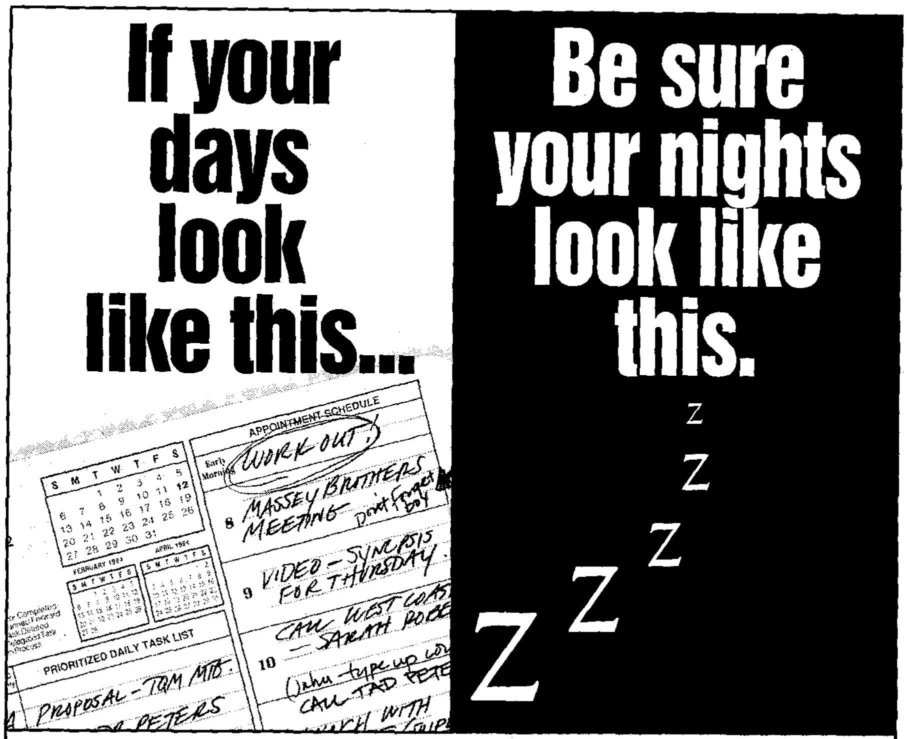
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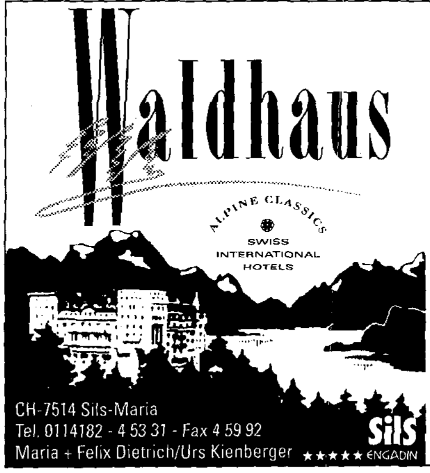

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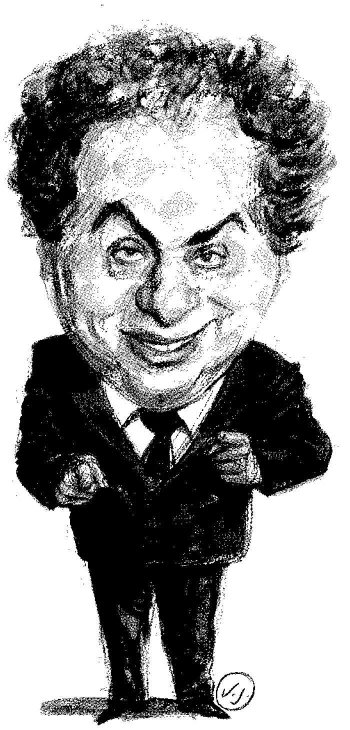
THE THEATRE

WORKING THE ROOM

BY JOHN LAHR

OUTSIDE, it was overcoat weather, but inside at the Golden, where "Jackie Mason: Politically Incorrect" is currently moored, the air-conditioning was on—a sure sign that a comedian was in residence. By a comic's logic, people must be comfortable to receive uncomfortable ideas. Mason's arena consisted of a red podium, white stars projected on an aquamarine cyclorama, and an American flag tucked into the left-hand corner of the stage—none of which, when the time came, he ever used or referred to. Mr. Mason entered to the strains of "Living in America" and proceeded immediately to launch himself at the first rows. "This is a very interesting show, Mister," he said, pronouncing it "Mistuh." "Are you a homosexual?" At first glance, Mason is a chipper sad sack. He walks with a kind of sailor's roll, his pot-belly preceding him by a few inches and housed under a natty gray double-breasted suit. This show of refinement is belied by his diction, which moves in and out of thick Yiddish inflection, turning "work," "words," and "girls" into "woik," "woids," and "goils." A small man with a big mouth, Mason stands before us in his sartorial propriety spilling out the impropriety of his doubts. "If you've got AIDS, you can come into this country," he says. "If you've got fruit, you can't." His sad, sunken eyes look out quizzically. "Do you understand this?" he says, and he repeats the phrase frequently throughout the evening, his bafflement releasing howls of laughter from the audience, most of whom, in today's earnest, politically correct climate, are afraid to admit the ambivalence of their hearts.

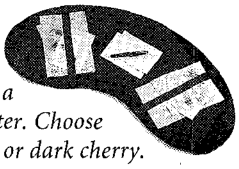


Jackie Mason's gripe is with liberal guilt, which he sees no reason for shouldering.

VICTOR JUHASZ

We live in a noisy republic. American democracy is always reinventing itself, and the air is loud with lamentation about change—either too much or too little. Change means loss, and loss is an uncomfortable feeling. And so Americans complain, and Mason, in particular, is in the avant-garde of the kvetching. In earlier, imperial times, Americans were obsessed with being winners; now, in our present sour moment, we're obsessed with being victims. And Mason is here to remind us that the empowered white middle-class majority feels victimized. "People today are being persecuted by minorities," he says, and his combative comedy insists on promoting, not silencing, the loud diversity essential to democracy. Mason, a former rabbi from a family of rabbis, uses the stage as his bully pulpit. Behind his shtick, which is sometimes vulgar but always funny, is a fundamentalist disgust at the world's fraud, wickedness, hypocrisy, and inhumanity—a disgust that gives him a curious aloofness and intensity. There are no morals; there are no standards; and now, worse luck for comedians, there are no more stereotypes.

Mason is no great comic mind, but he's a canny technician. His jokes, even when their conclusions are dubious, promote thought and tap into society's discontents. He presents him-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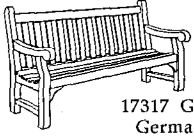
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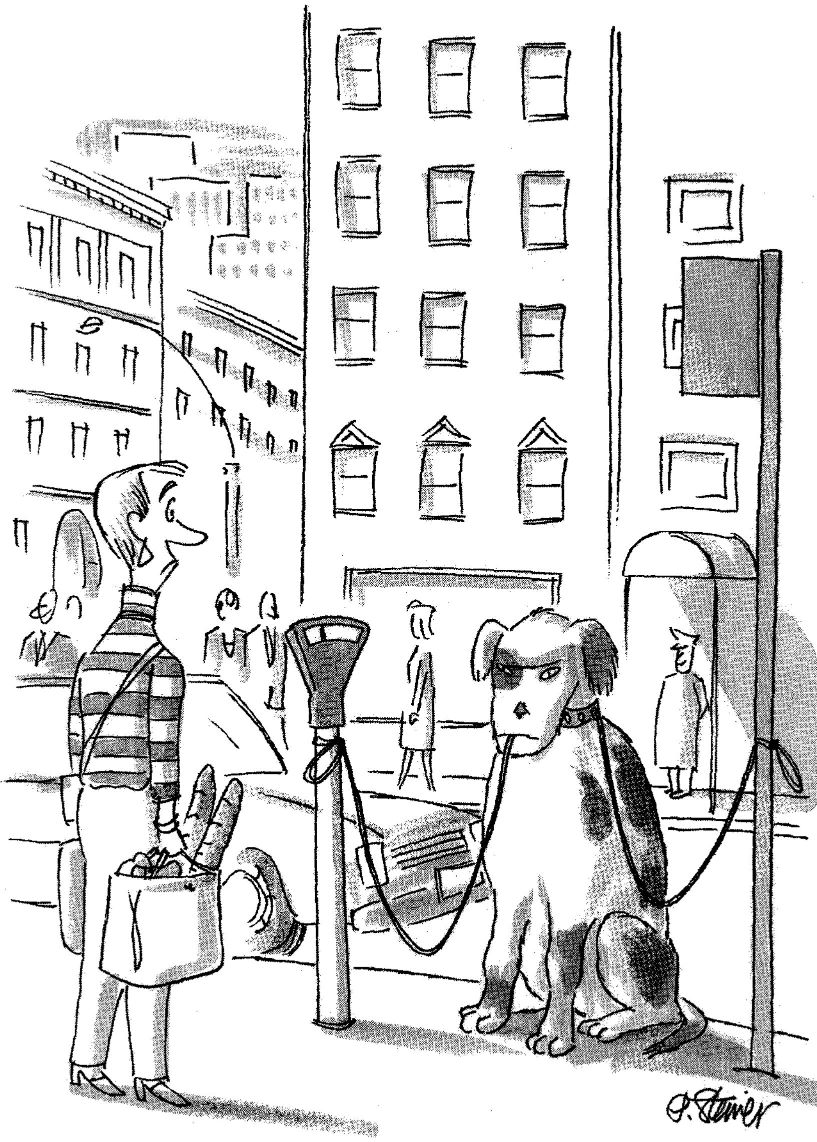

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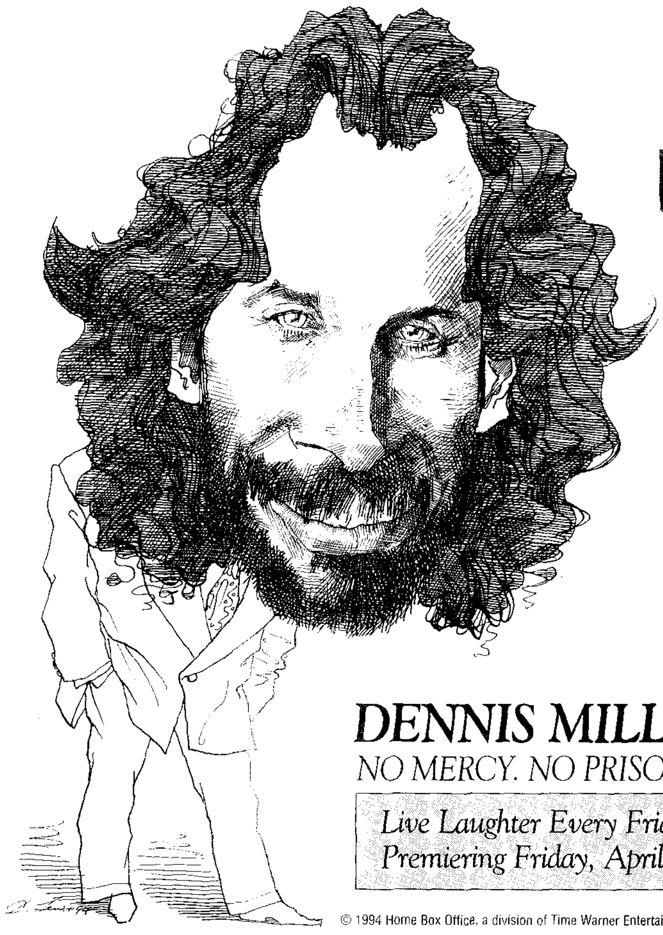
self as an ordinary Joe awash in the new relativism and double-teamed by hectoring activists. "Every time two homosexuals get together, there's a parade," he says. Mason's gripe is with liberal guilt, which he sees no reason for shouldering. On the issue of Louis Farrakhan's claim that the Jews were the slaveowners of the world, Mason shrugs wearily and says, "Jews came from Kiev. When did they have slaves?" He goes on, "Every decent person wants equality for all people," and he admits that without political upheaval blacks wouldn't have made the advances they did. But, he adds, blacks have burned down their own neighborhoods. "When Jews start a fire," he says, "we know what to do. Every fire shows a profit." To Mason, the white establishment has as much backbone as a soufflé. He turns its timorous backpedalling into hilarious Milquetoast davening: "I don't know how I became a heterosexual. I'll try to get over it. I'll see what I can do about it. It's not definite. Just because I have it doesn't mean I'm stuck with it. I know I could get over it. Gimme a chance."

Even though the full house, on the night I saw the show, was poleaxed with pleasure, the critics have more or less mugged it. "There's something they see in me that's a menace, a revolution, a fear, a panic—I dunno what," Mason told me, with the bewilderment that figures as much in his offstage persona as in his professional one. "They didn't even review me as a comedian. They reviewed me as though I were a problem." The problem is not his but theirs. Theatre is the proper arena for the illiberal as well as the liberal. When you're in the dark, facing the stage, surrounded by the laughter of others, repressed feelings can be coaxed out into the open. This can be both terrifying and thrilling, and you can see the panic and the elation on the faces of Mason's audience. Its members frequently laugh with their hands over their mouths, as if shocked at what Mason has called out of them. They are quite literally "beside themselves," exhilarated at having the weight of their apologetic correctness momentarily lifted by Mason's outlandishness. "The only person you can fire is a white Protestant American Gentile," he says.

Comedy's anarchy is currently abused by a mimetic fallacy; that is, a feeling among certain segments of the society that jokes, like TV violence, kill people. (On this issue of people's imitating behavior they see on TV, Mason also has a few words. "You ever walk to the window after watching 'Superman' and say, 'I think I'll go to Pittsburgh'?") Jokes don't kill people; what they kill is certainty, and activists can never forgive funnymen for this. To those hungry for progress, doubt is as welcome as modesty in a whore; but, while faith is nice, doubt gets you an education. And there's something to be learned about America's secret heart from listening both to Mason and to the response of his audience. He is not chic, he is not an intellectual (unless studying psychology in college counts), but he knows about middle-class guilt and about the inhibiting fear of public humiliation. "Freedom of speech is now in reverse," he says in his show. "People are panicky to express themselves, because they feel guilty. They're nervous. They're jumped on as soon as they say anything that could be implied as prejudice, even if it's ridiculous. But blacks are free to express themselves. They made a picture 'White Men Can't Jump.' Everybody enjoyed it. But if you made a picture 'Shvartzers Can't Fly'?"

Mason is skeptical about affirmative action. "How come there's no affirmative action for Jews?" he asks the audience. "Fifteen years ago, Jews couldn't get into medical school." And he goes on, "In order to compensate for the sins of the past, they are lowering the mark to make it easier for blacks and Hispanics to get into college. If a Jew wants to get into medical school, he needs an 89.9 average. If you're Hispanic, thirty-two is enough. If you're black, two. I'm not against affirmative action. If you have affirmative action for blacks and Hispanics so that they can go into medical school with a lower mark, why shouldn't there be lower basketball nets for the Jews?" It's Mason's contention that much of what is called discrimination is simply cultural difference. "There never was a Jewish hockey player thirty years ago," he says. "If they applied the same measurement to the Jews as to the blacks, you could claim it as a civil-rights problem. It has nothing to do with civil rights. The simple fact is that a Jew doesn't become a hockey player because he doesn't *want* to be a hockey player. When a Jew sees sticks flying around, he knows it's not for him. He could get hurt. As soon as sticks are flying back and forth, a Jew looks for a Gentile and says, 'Listen, Mister. That's for



"And don't tell me about God and guns, I've read the Bible. I know God didn't carry a gun and don't tell me it was ancient times and guns didn't exist. He was God. I think He could have invented one had He wanted to."

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you.' A Jew not only doesn't stay in the rink—he doesn't even watch it from the front row. A Jew knows in case of an accident he doesn't want to be even near it. He stays in the back with binoculars."

At intermission, the people next to me were deep in discussion about Mason's act. "What's his cause?" a young man asked. Mason's cause—any authentic comedian's cause—is intellectual freedom. "Is democracy only for candidates?" he says, setting his sights on President Clinton at the beginning of Act II. "Does he have a right to lie to you, and you don't have a right to mention it?" All genuine comedy is politically incorrect: challenging assumptions, testing limits, crossing boundaries, disabusing the public of its most firmly held beliefs. Mason ends the evening by spelling out the comic mission: "The purpose is to commemorate *the right to talk freely.*" The ordinary citizen can't and won't risk this, so we pay people like Mason a king's ransom to act out this dream of freedom for us. Mason doesn't really have a second act, but it hardly matters. The show's announced theme shifts to more generalized topical observations about the state of the nation, and the amperage of danger and dyspepsia drops accordingly. Mason is best when he uses the language of the man on the street to report on the big issues of state—especially the national-health-care proposals. To hear the audience laugh at Mason's imitation of public misunderstanding is to see how badly the government has communicated its policy. "There's not one guy who understands this program," Mason says, and he proceeds to act out a typical discussion. " 'How will it work?' 'You go into the doctor's office, and . . . as soon as the doctor sees ya, then all of a sudden that's it.' 'Who's gonna pay for it?' 'Whoever has the money.' 'Where will the money come from?' 'It'll come from . . . the people . . . who have it.' " Mason also teases, among many things, New York's inept Indian taxi drivers (" 'You know this city?' '*I* know this city.' *Calcutta* he knows") and Clinton's doublespeak about marijuana. "I smoked it, but I didn't inhale." Mason holds out his small hands and clucks, "Let's be honest. Would you put a

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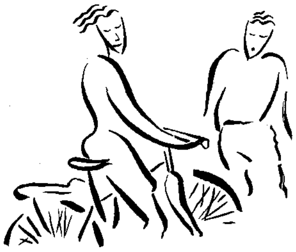

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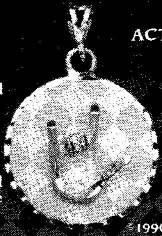

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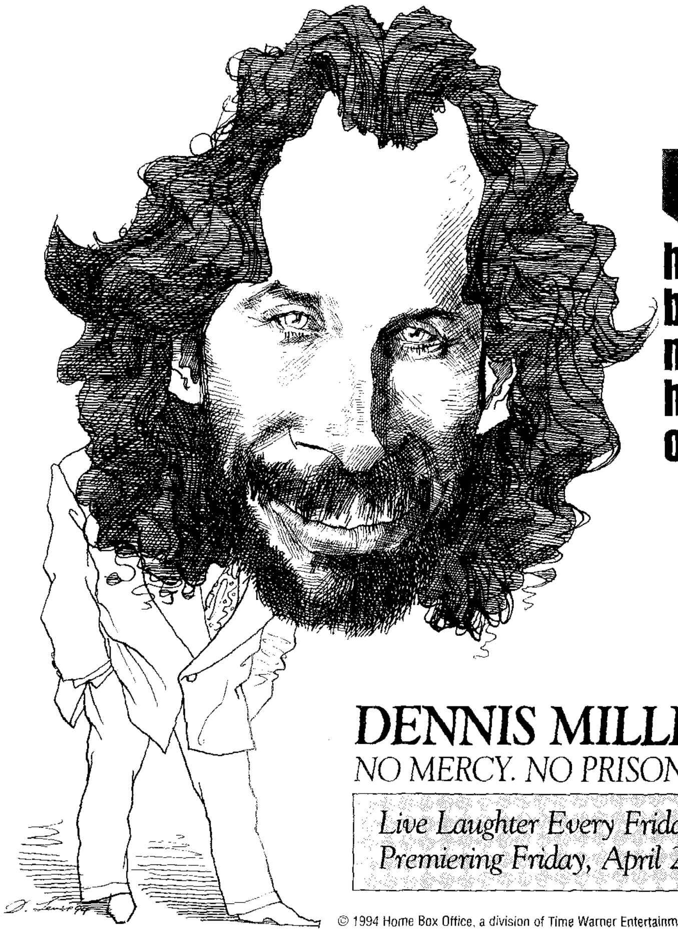
pastrami sandwich in your mouth if you didn’t want to swallow?”

“Mort Sahl’s America” brings one of the innovative funnymen of the fifties and sixties back to New York from L.A. after a seven-year absence. Sahl doesn’t so much have an axe to grind as he has a living to grind out. He is, as he tells us, an odd-job man on the lecture circuit and at the movie studios, where he rewrites films ranging from Robert Redford’s “Ordinary People” to Sydney Pollack’s “The Firm.” Suntanned and sharp-eyed, Sahl bounces onto the Theatre Four stage in a red V-neck sweater and blue button-down shirt, promising us news of politics and of the war between the sexes (he’s recently divorced but dating again), and delivers neither, really, but he does it with enormous laid-back charm. This is the man who characterized three generations of sexual politics in a single joke, which is still one of my all-time favorites: “In the fifties, you had to be a Jew to get a girl. In the sixties, you had to be a black to get a girl. In the seventies, you had to be a girl to get a girl.” At the beginning of the show, an announcer rolls Sahl’s credits, letting us know that Bill Clinton has called him “the Will Rogers of his generation.” Rogers twirled a rope; Sahl spins yarns about the rich, famous, and corrupt. He tells how his friend Woody Allen said that Sahl’s humor had changed his comedy and his life. Then he tells of seeing Allen recently at the Russian Tea Room and sending the maître d’ over with the line “Tell him the man who changed his life would like to see him.” Allen, in this account, embraces Sahl, saying, “Can you change it *back*?”

Sahl is sharply intelligent but too witty to be vulgar, and this is too bad. He doesn’t punch the heart of his audience so much as flatter its head. His gig is more a series of cocktail-party set pieces than a show. “Comedians are out to lunch,” he says. “They think comedy is to help you escape from the truth rather than highlight it.” Sahl is certainly not escaping, but he’s not attacking, either; he’s vamping. His America turns out to be talk shows, movie studios, cocktail parties, and Presidential banquets, with an occasional detour into the Warren Report. In fact, he reads verbatim a snatch of Earl Warren and the then Representative Gerald Ford interviewing a barman, Curtis LaVerne Crafard, who had worked at Jack Ruby’s Carousel Club before he was seized by F.B.I. men as he hightailed it out of town the day after the Kennedy assassination, saying, “They not going to pin this on me.” In the interview, Warren asks him what he did before he was a bartender. “I was a master sniper in the Marine Corps,” Crafard says. Warren’s next question is “What kind of entertainment did they have at the club?” It’s the one pure moment of political comedy in a show that otherwise bears out one of Sahl’s best quips: “An intellectual in show business is like the smartest bear in the zoo.” ♦



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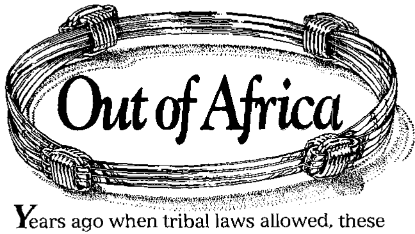

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THE THEATRE

THOROUGHLY MODERN MEDEA

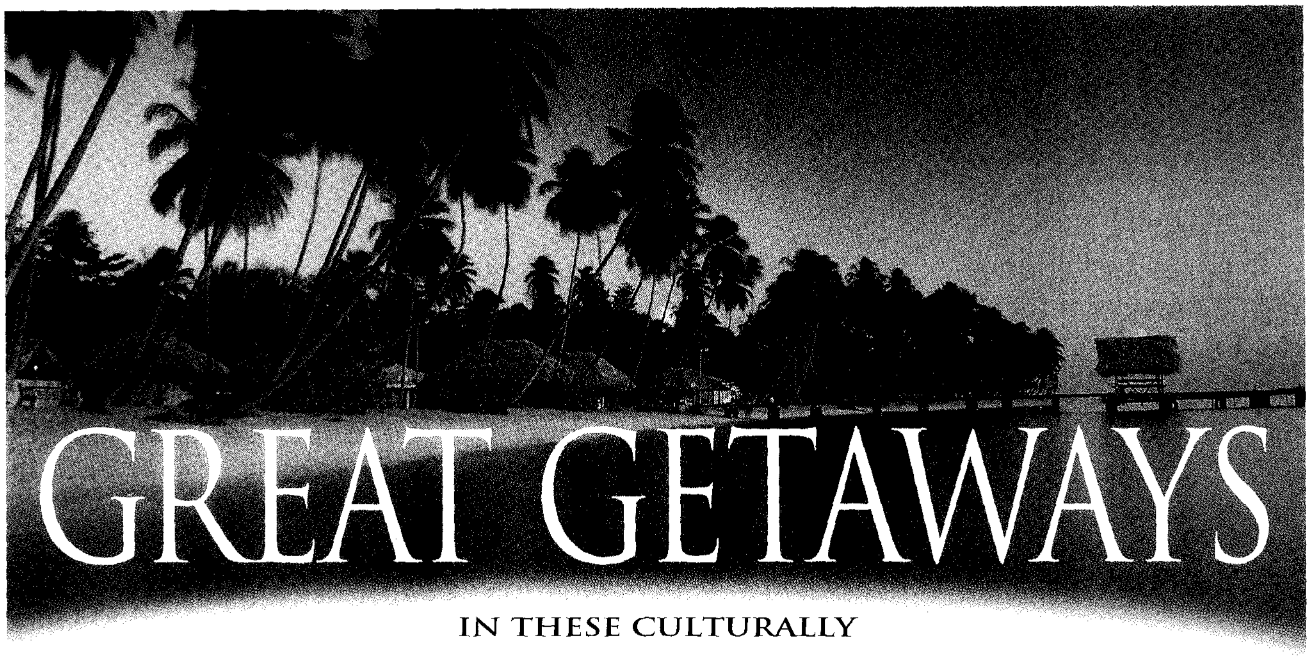
BY NANCY FRANKLIN

THE very idea of Diana Rigg playing Medea carries a thrilling electrical charge, created by the clash between the qualities that make her glamorous—her beauty, her sharp intelligence, her dignified dangerousness—and the terrible, unthinkable ends she must put them to. She played the role to great acclaim two years ago at London's Almeida Theatre and last year in the West End (it was the first Greek tragedy to be put on there in fifty years), and now she's reprising the role in a thirteen-week run of "Medea" at the Longacre, under the direction of the Almeida's Jonathan Kent. Rigg's performance, not surprisingly, emphasizes Medea's intellectual superiority to everyone around her, and gives real meaning to the concept of deadly wit. Such is the power of Medea's words that even Creon (John Turner), the King of Corinth and a towering block of a man, who has come to her palace to banish her and her sons from Corinth, admits to her, "I am afraid of you: no need to wrap the fact in phrases." Medea, barefoot and seated on the floor hugging her knees, and to all appearances the weaker of the two, replies, "I am clever, so the jealous hate me—or they find me difficult," adding, in an exasperated tone, "But I'm not *that* clever."

But she is that clever, and then some. Railing at Jason (Tim Oliver Woodward) for betraying her by taking another wife, she says, "The only weapon I own is words, to attack your failure as a husband! . . . It makes my life a little easier to spear you with my words; and watch you writhe." Rigg, of course, has a great weapon of her own: her powerful, sexy voice. After reminding Jason of the many ways she helped him, she says, in a throaty, venomous rumble, "And now you drop me," growling each word with full force. She buries him under the weight of her contempt, and then drips killing sarcasm on the pile: "But, in the age-old phrase, let's try to be friends." (Alistair Elliot's new translation, which is clear and easy to follow, has a few other zingers, though mostly it doesn't pander to contemporary idioms.) In every instance, this Medea's words have a perfectly calibrated, calculated effect; so completely has she ground her grief into a precision instrument of anger that even her plan to murder her children seems to be the product not of passion or fate but of controlled will—a matter of choice. There's great physicality and magnetism in Rigg's performance, but sometimes her verbal mastery prevents you from feeling the burning core of grief that makes Medea's dreadful acts seem necessary and inevitable. You do feel it, though, at the beginning of the play, before you hear Medea speak even one word. You see her sitting on a chair high above the stage, inside her house. The set consists of two enormous walls of rusted, riveted steel plates, and it suggests hopelessness and inexorable decay on a monumental scale. (At the end, the set, so dramatic that it functions as a main character, conveys the horror of what Medea has done.) Medea, wearing a long red dress, her hair pulled tight on her head and held together in a braid down her back, sits silent and utterly still, in a posture of ancient and pitiful despair, while below her on the stage her nurse (Janet Henfrey, who is very good as this empathetic handwringer) voices the fear that her mistress is plotting something terrible, all because of a man.

Now, about this man. It can't be easy to play Jason opposite a star like Diana Rigg, who has the audience on her side even as she's setting about murdering her children, but Mr. Woodward never makes you believe that he is a man who could ruin Medea's life, because you can't imagine him in her life in the first place. He's a big galoot with a little pigtail, full of tough-guy self-regard. (You've seen his type on the subway: he's the one who plants his legs far apart and takes up three seats.) Still, the mismatch doesn't take anything away from Rigg's performance, which is what the audience has come to see. The stalwart women of the chorus, who are onstage during the entire play, should also be mentioned. They are Judith Paris, Jane Loretta Lowe, and Nuala Willis, and we should all have so fine a contralto as Ms. Willis to accompany our suffering. ♦

Pete Seaward



GREAT GETAWAYS

IN THESE CULTURALLY CONSCIOUS TIMES, PASSIONATE TRAVELLERS CAN DISCOVER THE DEEP, RICH ROOTS OF CREATIVITY BENEATH EACH DESTINATION'S SUN-KISSED SURFACE.

LITERARY LIONS

The roar heard when St. Lucian-born Derek Walcott captured the Nobel Prize for Poetry in 1992 reverberated all over this island of dramatic beauty. Now, in 1994, Walcott is busy launching an International Creative Arts Centre on Rat Island (an offshore mini-island), where, beginning around mid-decade, artists and writers such as Joseph Brodsky, Seamus Heaney, and Maya Angelou will conduct summer seminars.

Dominica, an island with beauty reminiscent of the paintings of Rousseau, was home to Jean Rhys, winner of the 1955 Royal Society of Literature prize for her novel "Wide Sargasso Sea." Visitors here can visit the garden of this writer's former home and sip tea under her tamarind tree.

You can always drum up a good conversation with Desmond V. Nicholson, director of the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, located in a historic site in St. John's that dates from 1750. Nicholson is Antigua's "main man" when it comes to history and archaeology, and he's produced scholarly books and papers, ranging from "The Arawaks" to studies of the medicinal qualities of plants and herbs.

The French West Indies are bursting with Gallic food and fame. Residents of Guadeloupe remain proud of native son Saint-John Perse, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1960. On a more recent literary note, it's great fun, and an intellectual experience as well, to drop in on Simone Schwartz-Bart at her antiques shop in Point-a-Pitre. She is one of the French West Indies' outstanding authors.

All photographs © Tony Stone Worldwide

Bob Krist

THE CULTURAL INGENUITY OF THESE LANDS INSURES THAT TODAY'S VISITORS WILL RETURN HOME WITH MUCH MORE THAN A TAN TO TALK ABOUT.

In Martinique, the mayor of Fort-de-France, Aime Cesaire, is noted for his poetry and prose. Some of his better known books are at the forefront of the "negritude" movement, particularly "Notes On a Return to the Native Land."

With its British past and exotic present, Barbados is an island of wonderful cultural blends. Relax with George Lamming's "In the Castle of My Skin," an autobiographical novel of growing up in Barbados. Or, on a more lyrical note, sample Frank Collymore's "Collected Poems." The works of history professor and poet Edward Kamau Brathwaite are musts, too, for the well-read visitor to Barbados.

Just a half-hour from San Juan, Puerto Rico, the beauty of Luquillo Beach stretches beside coconut palms and picnic groves. The magnificent El Yunque rain forest is nearby, with dozens of trails leading through twenty-eight thousand acres of wild beauty.

Named after the Indian spirit Yuquiyu, the forest was used by Carib Indians as a place to hole up from the invading Spanish. As you will see as you hike through, this jungle-rich interior, with its 240 species of trees, wild orchids, and the chirp of "coquis" (tree frogs) all around, is a good place to lose yourself and begin one of the works of Puerto Rican native Rosario Ferre.

Though travel to Cuba is restricted for most Americans, it's still possible to sample that country's many cultural offerings—in your local library. Nicholas Guillen is known as the poet laureate of the Cuban revolution, and his work holds a deep sense of this country's self. And Alejo Carpentier's historical and contemporary novels "The Kingdom of the World," "The Chase," and "Explosion in the Cathedral" are considered classics of Cuban literature.

Top: A beautiful beach on the island of Tobago; St. Lucian girls are a vision in white.

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PAINTER'S PALETTE

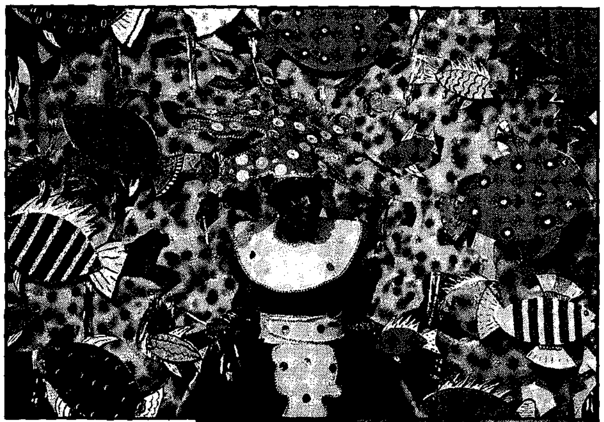
The half-Dutch, half-French island of St. Maarten/St. Martin is strategically placed for day sails to the nearby islands of Anguilla, Saba, and St. Barts. The little-known art community here comes as a pleasant surprise to most visitors. St. Maarten-born Nanette Bearden devotes most of her time to her Fine Art Gallery, in Philipsburg. There she exhibits the intricate collages and watercolors of her late husband, Romare Bearden, as well as the works of other St. Maarten-based artists, such as the oils and watercolors of Henry Mosura.

St. Martin, the French side of the island, is home to more than a dozen small art galleries. Le Poisson d'Or Gallery, in Marigot, is the site of the Historic and Cultural Association and presents the work of Mosura, Ruby Bute, Antoine Chapon, and the premier St. Martin painter, Roland Richardson.

THE THIRTY-ODD ISLANDS THAT SWING THEIR WAY ALONG A CARIBBEAN CHAIN ARE A CACHE OF HOMEGROWN TALENT

When British-born Rosey Cameron traded the chilly shores of her native land for the warmer climate of the Leeward Island of St. Kitts, her London fine-arts training came into full bloom. She began the Spencer Cameron Art Gallery; the gallery now shows a wide-range of noted Caribbean artists.

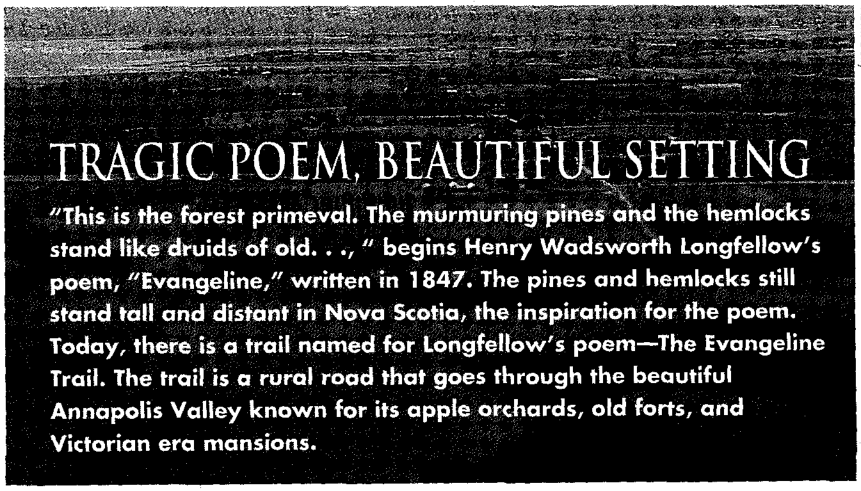
The spice island of Grenada is known for its Saturday morning food market—a cornucopia of local vegetables, fruits, and, of course, spices. Grenada's island satellite, Carriacou, is known as the home of artist Canute Calliste, who sent a painting to George Bush and received from him a treasured letter of appreciation. Calliste and his many grandchildren are shining examples of the Grenadian spirit of bonhomie.



Sylvain Grandadam

Cosmo Condina

Top: Bright colors are a mainstay of Carnival in the Caribbean; hues of all shades are seen in a sunset in the Dominican Republic.



Kevin Duffy

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"This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks stand like druids of old. . ., " begins Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "Evangeline," written in 1847. The pines and hemlocks still stand tall and distant in Nova Scotia, the inspiration for the poem. Today, there is a trail named for Longfellow's poem—The Evangeline Trail. The trail is a rural road that goes through the beautiful Annapolis Valley known for its apple orchards, old forts, and Victorian era mansions.

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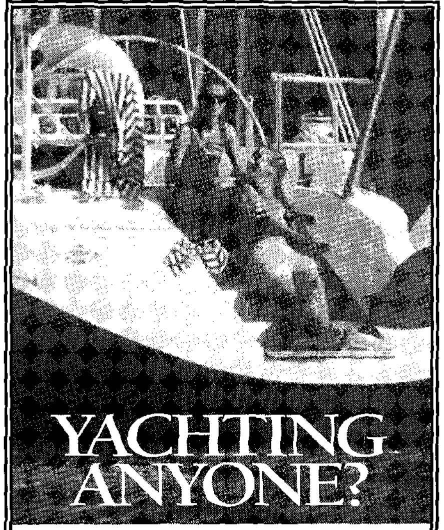

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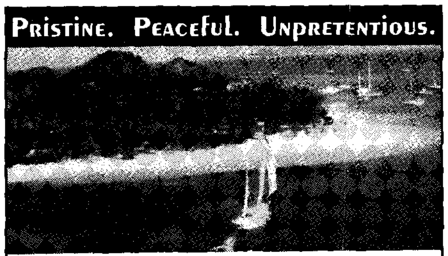

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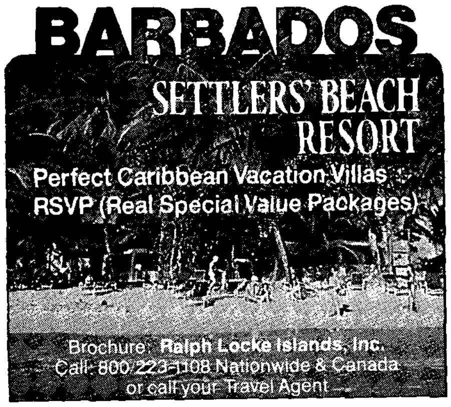

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ON THE BOARDS AND TO THE BEAT

With more than thirty repertory theatres in Kingston, visitors to Jamaica will generally find six to ten plays on the boards year-round, ranging from light comedy to dark drama. The level of Jamaican homegrown talent is legendary, and is exemplified by the National Dance Theatre Company.

From July 21 to August 14, the NDTC, at the Little Theatre in Kingston, explores traditional and modern-dance forms. One presentation, "The Court of Jah," was choreographed to the music of Bob Marley, and the quasi-religious piece "Kumina" is traditionally the closing show of the summer season.

Although it's catch-as-catch can, occasional performances of the Papiamento Theatre take place on Curaçao. More reliable offerings for evening entertainment are available at Landhuis Brievengat on Friday nights, with two bands and a come-everyone attitude.

The Dominican Republic has devoted an entire plaza to its cultural treasures, appropriately called the Plaza de la Cultura, in the capital city of Santo Domingo. The National Theatre stages dramas in Spanish and international dance performances. Well worth a separate day visit are the nearby Museum of the Dominican Man, the Museum of Natural History, and the Gallery of Modern Art.

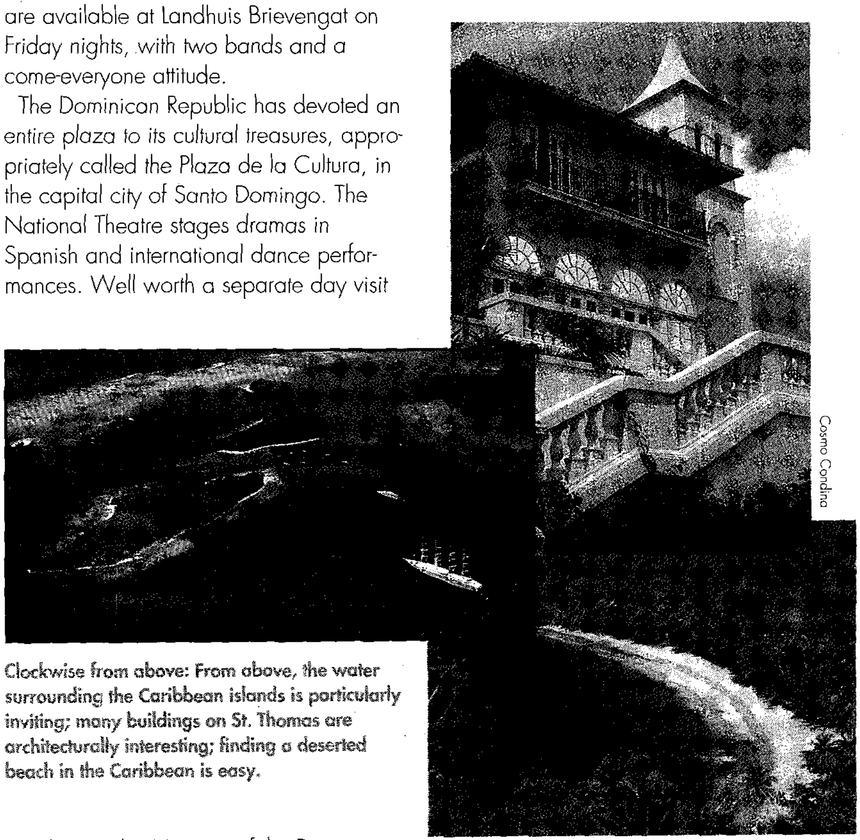
The culturally rich island of Trinidad is the home of steel bands, locally called "pan." This land's sensational Carnival (held in mid-February), is now 210 years old. Since the work that goes into the carnival bash is year-round, it's always possible to visit the pan yards, where the bands practice continually, and to go to the Mas Camps, where the elaborate costumes are always under construction.

From July 15-August 1, the tiny island of Tobago holds its own major event, the Tobago Heritage Festival. Day and night, there's not only dancing in the streets but storytelling in the villages and productions of an "ole time wedding" and an "ole time Carnival."

Though many of the calypso "greats" are Trinidad-born, it is the cultivated island of Montserrat that produced the true king of calypso—The Mighty Arrow. On this emerald island it's possible to rent luxurious villas, complete with private staff and swimming pool.

ECOTOURISTS APPRECIATE THE NEW CAYMAN ISLANDS NATIONAL BOTANIC PARK ON GRAND CAYMAN

Anguilla is certainly high on the list of small lands that have produced big voices. Native-born Bankie Banx has been so popular with his reggae that he's gone international: nowadays he performs in London and Miami as often as he does at home. His annual "do," held in late January, is called Moonsplash. Otherwise, ask around. Every waiter on the island will know his whereabouts, or that of Dumpa

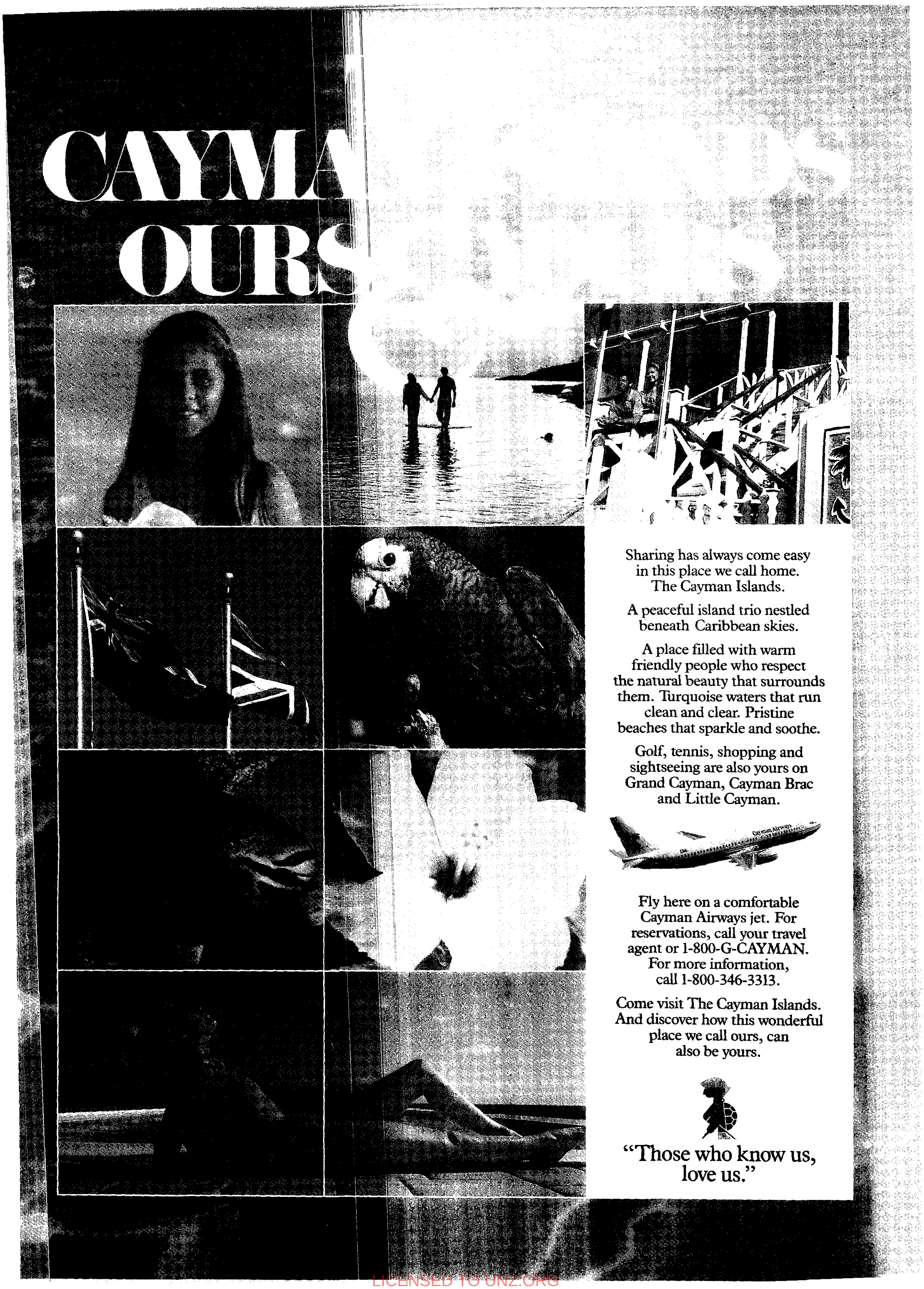


Bob Krist

Cosmo Condina

Oliver Benn

Clockwise from above: From above, the water surrounding the Caribbean islands is particularly inviting; many buildings on St. Thomas are architecturally interesting; finding a deserted beach in the Caribbean is easy.



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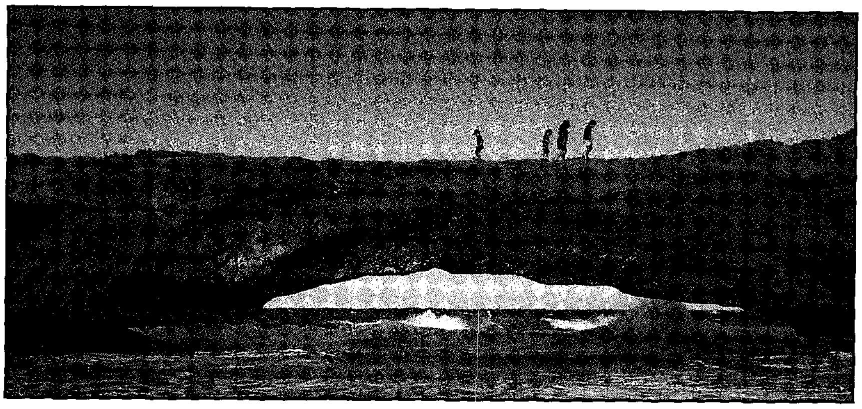
Bob Krist

On Aruba, a natural bridge serves as a unique spot for beachcombers to view the waves.

and his steel drums.

Even tiny, twelve-square-mile Statia (St. Eustatius) has produced an international steel band, the Statia Steel Band, which performs classical music. This island remains warm and friendly, despite having been systematically looted by a British admiral in the late 1700s in retaliation for Statia's being the first foreign land to salute the new flag of the United States, which was being flown on the brig "Andrew Doria."

The wild and wonderful island of St. Vincent—a largely untouched, sixteen-by-nine-mile land—has the oldest botanical gardens in the Western Hemisphere. An island this untrammeled has had to produce its own musical forms, which are embodied in the ten-to-twelve-member brass bands that use guitars, drums, horns and organ. Also unique to this island are the eight-men bamboo bands of flute, guitar, banjo, and the *shak-shak*, a bamboo wood instrument.

BODY AND MIND STRETCHES

In the Virgin Islands it is possible to fly high and get down—in the water, that is—in the space of one day. Take an hour-long "flightseeing" seaplane in the morning, which will take you over the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. You'll see how the dramatic hills of St. Thomas give way to the gentler topography of St. Croix, with its three national parks. The twenty-eight square miles of St. John may be small but they are special indeed. The lush greenery of the island's highest point, 1,277-foot Bordeaux Mountain, gives way to the ruins of an eighteenth-century sugar plantation, the Annaberg Plantation. Even from the air St. John's dedication to its environment is clear: the national park here encompasses two-thirds of the entire island, and contains petroglyphs and rock carvings from the pre-Columbian era.

THE LAST ROYAL RULER OF HAWAII, KING KALAKUA, REINSTATED THE ISLAND DANCE KNOWN AS THE HULA

Bob Krist

When the sun sets on St. John's Cruz Bay in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the view is spectacular.

Winging over some of the British Virgin Islands, you'll spot large and small yachts flirting with the steady breezes and the sapphire blue seas. Cruise ships will often be anchored at Norman Island, B.V.I., but only private yachts are allowed at the exclusive hundred-and-forty-acre Biras Creek peninsula. There are myriad diving possibilities at the eleven-mile spread of the Anegada coral reef, the second largest in the Northern Hemisphere.

Some truly high adventure comes during the shark-feeding dives off Grand Bahama, where twelve certified divers go for a one-tank dive among sand sharks, nurse sharks, and blue sharks, who show up for a frozen herring lunch. They also operate a much tamer, forty-five minute dive among dolphins, where ten divers, with two professional instructors along, sit

Larry Ulrich

Hawaii is, naturally, the only state in the U.S. where Polynesian royalty once reigned, and it is also where the only palace in America stands: Honolulu's Iolani Palace. Built in 1882 by King David Kalakua, this palace was the setting for formal dinners, royal balls, luaus, and the nonstop poker games to which the king was addicted. The unique tropical beauty of the seven main islands—Hawaii, Kauai, Lanai, Maui, Molokai, Nihau and Oahu—has lured some of literature's royalty as well.

Robert Louis Stevenson came to explore and "Travels in Hawaii" was the result. Mark Twain researched his "Letters from Hawaii" here, and Somerset Maugham's infatuation with these islands shines through in "Trembling of a Leaf."

Attending some of the many cultural events scattered throughout the year should be on the agenda of every visitor to Hawaii. These include the Kingsize Aloha Festival held on each island from mid September to mid-October, stage performances held at the Diamond Head Theatre through May, continuous exhibits at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, and even a mid-August Hula Camp at the Kualoa Regional Park on Oahu.

Adventurous travellers should include a visit to little-known Lanai island on their itinerary. South Lanai is home to new luxury hotels, the completely renovated plantation-era Lanai Theatre and Playhouse, and, just a jeep ride away, near Kaumalapau Harbor, is the National Historic Landmarks protected site of houses, stone shelters, grave markings, and petroglyphs of unknown origin.

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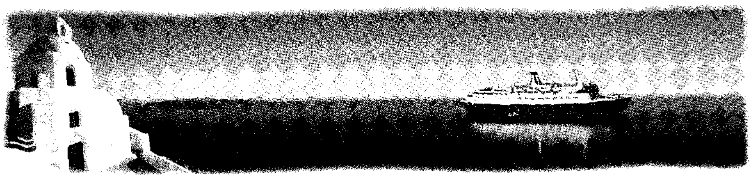

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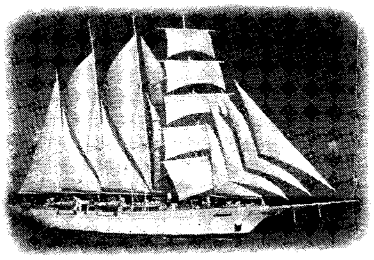

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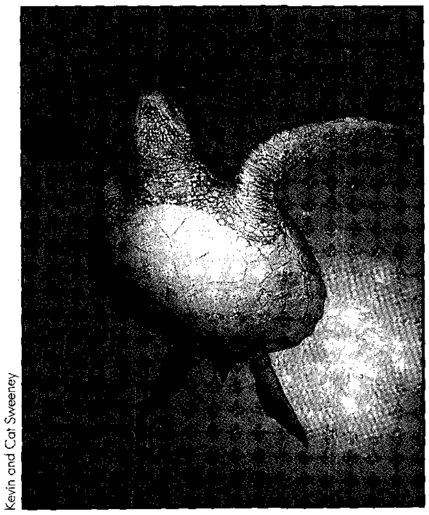
The sea and the land offer visitors to Aruba body-stretching experiences. Nearly five hundred professional windsurfers show up for the annual, mid-June, Aruba Hi-Winds Pro Am World Cup. During the ten-day event, cooks set up barbecues along the beach, and visitors can sample that day's catch, including wahoo, red snapper, and grouper, along with chicken and local trimmings, while they watch the brilliant sails and the even more brilliant sailors.

For those who don't fancy a sail on the waves, Aruba offers another option: sailing on land in sailcarts. A descendant of the Norwegian ice boat, the sailcart is a triangle of stainless steel with three wheels and a fifteen-foot sail. Passengers fold themselves into the molded plastic seat and cruise along a marked course at Druif Beach.

Snorkeling and diving are so much a part of the Caribbean life-style that the diver's dream island of Bonaire, with more than eighty dive sites, has instituted an annual photographic "shootout." From June 18 to 25 the Eighth Annual Nikonos Shootout is held in the Bonaire Marine Park, with participants competing for more than $100,000 in prizes.

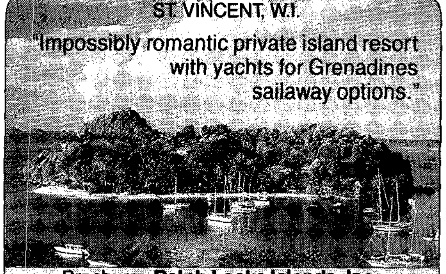
The Cayman Islands more than fulfill Jacques Cousteau's statement that Bloody Bay, off Little Cayman, is one of the world's top dives. Water visibility often exceeds one hundred feet. Snorkelers prefer the coral ledge south of George Town on Grand Cayman's west coast, with its rich coral and fish life. Ecotourists appreciate the new Cayman Islands National Botanic Park on Grand Cayman opened



Kevin and Cat Sweeney

A green sea turtle swims in the Caribbean waters.

YOUNG ISLAND



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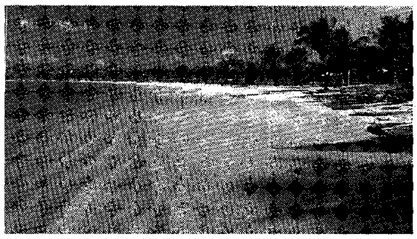

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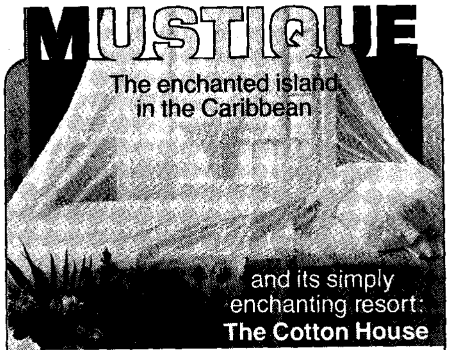

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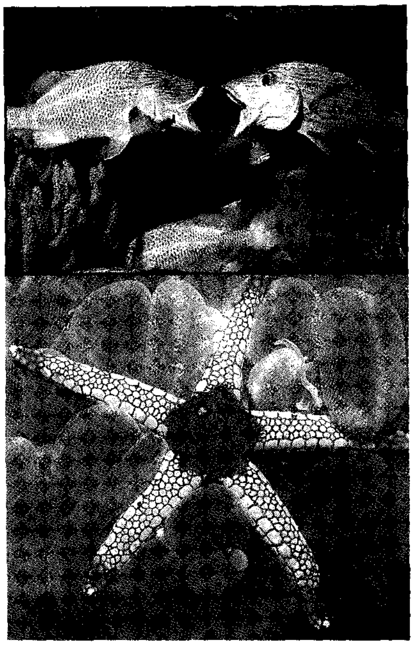
this winter. "Birders" in particular enjoy the chance to spot a Grand Cayman parrot, the Cuban bullfinch, or the West Indian woodpecker.

The Caymans certainly must be doing something right, since they played host to Queen Elizabeth II on her two day State Visit in late February. From all reports, Her Majesty was properly enthralled.

THE SEA AND LAND OFFER VISITORS TO ARUBA BODY-STRETCHING EXPERIENCES



Marc Chamberlain

Little Cayman offers great opportunities to view sea life; another colorful specimen—the orange and red seastar.

The Turks and Caicos Islands are composed of forty islands surrounded by a reef system of more than two hundred square miles. One of the Caribbean's most famed wall dives is at Grand Turk, where the wall drops more than seven thousand feet. There is also one great, unique recreational rush around these islands each year: From January through March thousands upon thousands of Atlantic humpback whales swim through this area, en route to their breeding grounds in the Dominican Republic.

Sandra Hart divides her time between New York, Miami, and the Caribbean, where she finds sailing the best means of researching the Caribbean.

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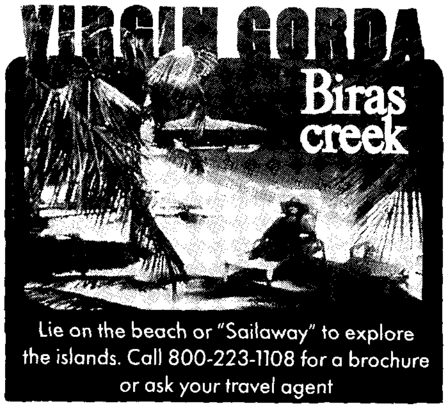

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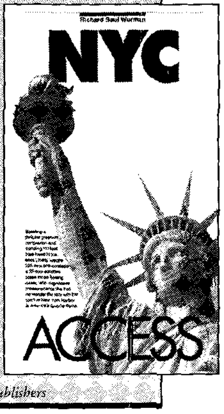

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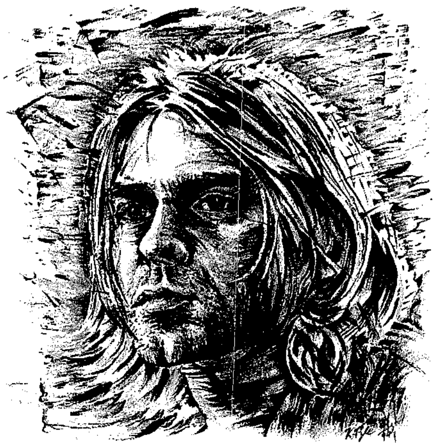
POSTSCRIPT

GENERATION EXIT

BY ALEX ROSS

When Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of the band Nirvana, killed himself with a shotgun blast to the head, the major media outlets gave the story wide play and warmed to its significance. Dan Rather led off hesitantly, his face full of dim amazement as he read aloud phrases like "the Seattle sound" and "Smells Like Teen Spirit." But ABC ventured bravely into interpretation, explaining the grunge phenomenon to "people over thirty" and obtaining one man-in-the-street reaction. "When you reach that kind of fame and you're still miserable, there's something wrong," a long-haired stoner-looking dude observed. And NBC's correspondent ambitiously invoked "the violence, the drugs, and the diminished opportunities of an entire generation," with Tom Brokaw appending a regretful smirk. This was only the evening of the first day; the newsstands were soon heavy with fresh musings on the latest lost generation, the twilit twenty-somethings, the new unhappiness.



Kurt Cobain:
an unrhapsodizable death.

KEVIN PYLE

From the outset of his career, the desperately individualistic Cobain was caught in a great media babble about grunge style and twenty-something discontent. His intensely personal songs became exhibits in the nation's ongoing symposium on generational identity—a fruitless project blending the principles of sociology and astrology. Those of us at the receiving end of Generation X theories find them infuriating enough; Cobain, hounded with titles like "crown prince of Generation X," buckled under them. He was loudly and publicly tormented by his notoriety, his influence, his importance. Everything written about him and his wife, Courtney Love, seemed to wound him in some way. "I do not want what I have got," he sang on his last album, yearning for oblivion of one kind or another.

And yet he chose a way of death guaranteed to bring down a hailstorm of analytical blather far in excess of anything he had experienced while he was alive. This is the paradoxical allure of suicide: to leave the chattering world behind and yet to stage-manage the exit so that one is talked about in the right way. This was also the paradox of Cobain's bizarre pop-star career—his choice both to abandon everyday life and to try to cast some larger spell over it. He thought he could appropriate blank categories like "Generation X" and "alternative culture" and fill them with the earnest ideals of the punk-rock subculture he came from. He thought he could take the road less travelled and then persuade everyone to follow him. It's amazing he got as far as he did.

"Alternative": A breathtakingly meaningless word, the emptiest cultural category imaginable. It proposes that the establishment is reprehensible but that our substitute establishment can somehow blissfully coexist with it, on the same commercial playing field. It differs from sixties notions of counterculture in that no one took "alternative culture" seriously even at the beginning; it sold out as a matter of principle. MTV, the video clubhouse that brought Nirvanamania to fever pitch, seized on the "alternative" label as a way to laterally diversify its offerings, much as soft-drink companies seek to invent new flavors. The aesthetic microscope has not been invented that could find a really significant difference between an alternative band like Pearl Jam and the regular-guy rock that it supposedly replaces.

Alternative music in the nineties claims descent from the punk-rock movement that traversed America in the seventies and eighties. The claim is weakened by the fact that punk in its pure form disavowed mass-market success, a disavowal that united an otherwise motley array of youth subcultures: high-school misfits of all kinds, skateboard kids, hardcore skinheads, doped-out postcollegiate slackers. Punk's peculiar obsession was musical autonomy—independent labels, clubs installed in suburban garages and warehouses, flyers and fanzines photocopied after hours. Some of the music was vulgar and dumb, some of it brilliantly inventive; rock finally had a viable avant-garde. In the eighties, this do-it-yourself network solidified into independent, or indie, rock, anchored in the myriad college-rock stations and alternative newspapers. Dumbness persisted, but there were always scattered bands picking out weird, rich chords and giving no thought to a major-label future.

Nirvana, which enjoyed local celebrity on the indie-rock scenes of Aberdeen, Olympia, and Seattle, Washington, before blundering into the mainstream, was perfectly poised between the margin and the center of rock. The band didn't have to dilute itself to make the transition, because its brand of grunge rock already drew more on the thunderous tread of hard rock and heavy metal than on the clean, fast, matter-of-fact attack of punk or hardcore. Where punk and indie bands generally made vocals secondary to the disordered clamor of guitars, Nirvana depended on Cobain's resonantly snarling voice, an instrument full of commercial potential from the start. But the singer was resolutely punk in spirit. He undermined his own publicity campaigns, and used his commercial clout to support lesser-known bands; he was planning to start his own label, Exploitation Records, and distribute the records himself while he was on tour.

The songs on Nirvana's breakthrough second album, "Nevermind," walked a difficult line between punk form and pop content. For the most part, they tri-

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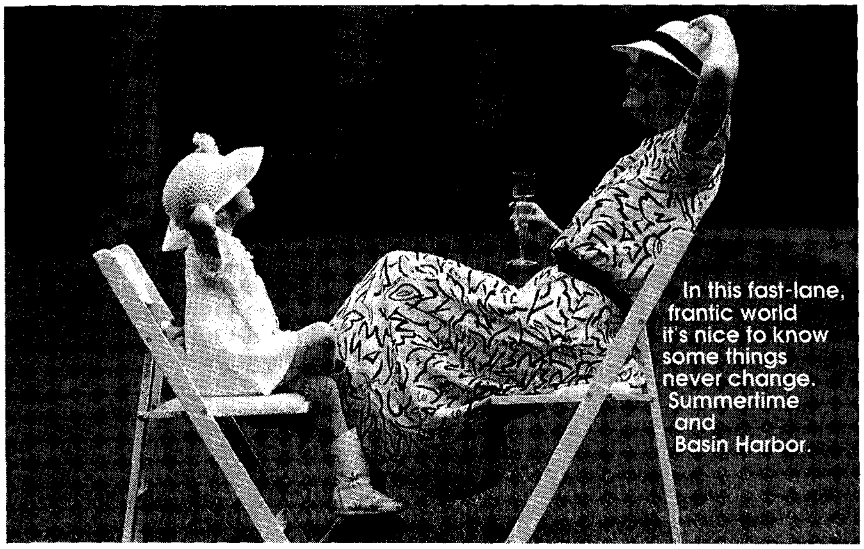

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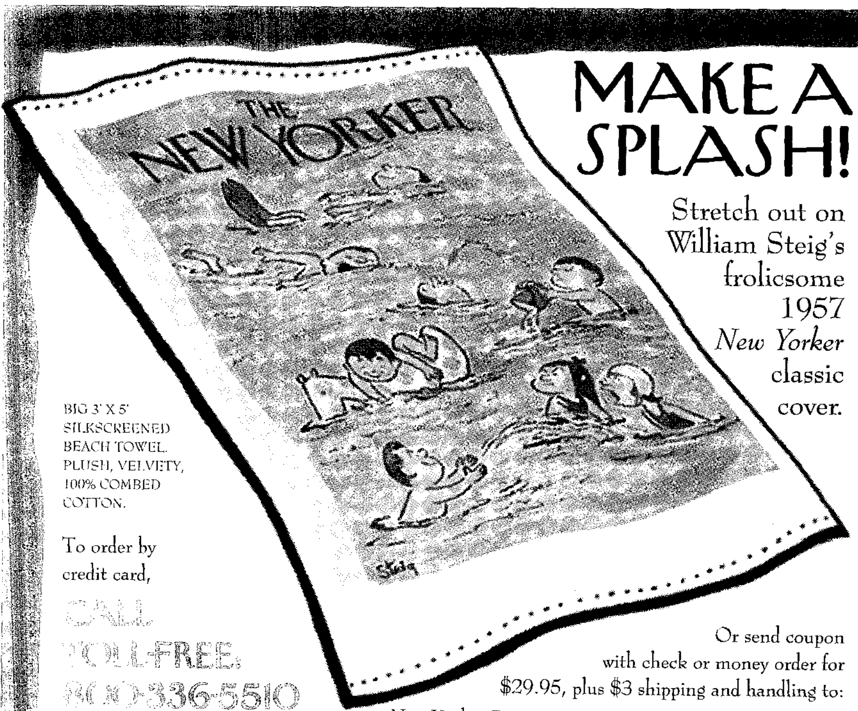

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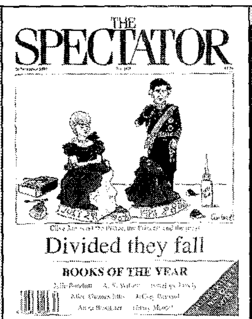
umphed, and, more than that, they struck a nerve, not only with trend-seeking kids but with people in their twenties or older who recognized the mixture of components that went into the music. Dave Grohl, the dead-on drummer who kept Nirvana on an even keel, has a pragmatic view of the album's appeal: "The songs were catchy and they were simple, just like an ABC song when you were a kid." Cobain was a close, direct presence, everyone's friendless friend. The songs, despite their sometimes messy roar, were cunningly fashioned. They had a seductive way of switching in midstream from plaintive meditation to all-out frenzy. If people still listen to Nirvana ten years from now, it will be on the strength of the music, not of Cobain's nascent martyr legend.

It was in the fall of 1991 that Nirvana mysteriously took hold of the nation's youth consciousness and began selling records in the millions. It's best not to analyze this sudden popularity all that closely; as Michael Azerrad points out in his book on the group, "Come As You Are," the kind of instantaneous word-of-mouth sensation that lifted the band to the top of the charts also buoyed the careers of such differently talented personalities as Peter Frampton and Vanilla Ice. Adolescents are an omnipotent commercial force precisely because their tastes are so mercurial. In the deep dusk of the Bush Administration, some segments of the nation's youth undoubtedly identified with Cobain's punkish world view, his sympathies and discontents, and, yes, the diminished opportunities of an entire generation. Others just got off on the crushing power of the sound.

Cobain was at once irritated and intrigued by the randomness of his new audience. He lashed out at the "jock numbskulls, frat boys, and metal kids" (in Azerrad's words) who jammed clubs and arenas for his post-"Nevermind" tours. But he also liked the idea of bending their minds toward his own punk ideals and left-leaning politics: "I wanted to fool people at first. I wanted people to think that we were no different than Guns n' Roses. Because that way they would listen to the music first, accept us, and then maybe start listening to a few things that we had to say." After the initial period of fame, he let loose with social messages, not as heavy-handed or as earnest as R.E.M.'s, but carefully aimed.



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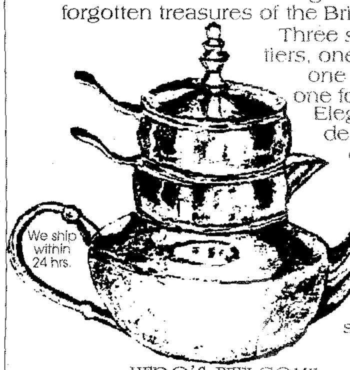

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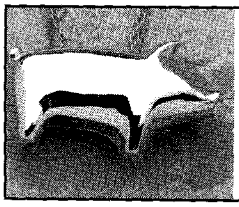

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He was happy to discover that high schools were divided between Nirvana kids and Guns n' Roses kids.

The zeal for subversion was well meant but naïve. By condemning racists, sexists, and homophobes in his audiences, he may have promoted the cause of politically correct language in certain high-school cliques, but he did not and could not attack the deep-seated prejudices smoldering beneath that language. When he declared himself "gay in spirit," as he did in an interview with the gay magazine *The Advocate*, he made a political toy out of fragile identity. And his disavowals of masculine culture rang false alongside a stage show that dealt in sonic aggression and equipment-smashing mayhem. Who was he kidding?

The attempt to carry out social engineering through rock lyrics is an impossible one. Rock and roll has never been and will never be a vehicle for social amelioration, despite many fond hopes. Music is robbed of its intentions and associations as it goes out into the great wide open; like a rumor passed through a crowd, it emerges utterly changed. Pop songs become the property of their fans and are marked with the circumstances of their consumption, not of their creation. An unsought listenership can brand the music indelibly, as the Beatles discovered with "Helter Skelter." Or as Cobain discovered when a recording of "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was played at a Guns n' Roses show in Madison Square Garden while women in the audience were ogled on giant video screens.

IN his suicide note Cobain gestured toward all these crises, his lack of passion, and his disconnectedness from the broad rock audience. The story underneath is probably simpler and sadder: he was trying to get off drugs and found himself helpless without their support. He leaned on drugs long before he became famous—the malevolent media circus of his last few years cannot be easily blamed. Even when he started out, he looked tired and haggard. The rest of the story lies between him and his dealer. It's easy to make too much of these inevitable chemical tragedies; witness the overexamined case of River Phoenix, whom some of us necrologized last November. Next time, it will not shock me when a vulnerable, talented misfit about my age infiltrates celebrity

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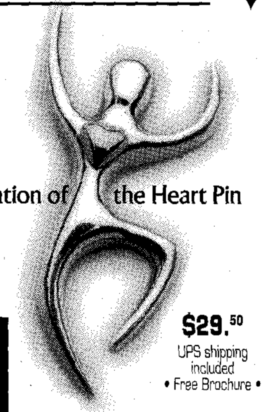

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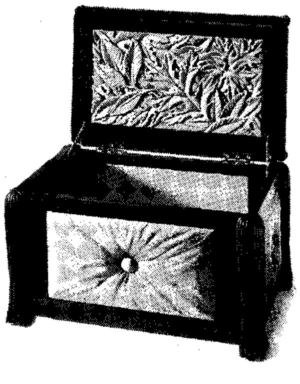

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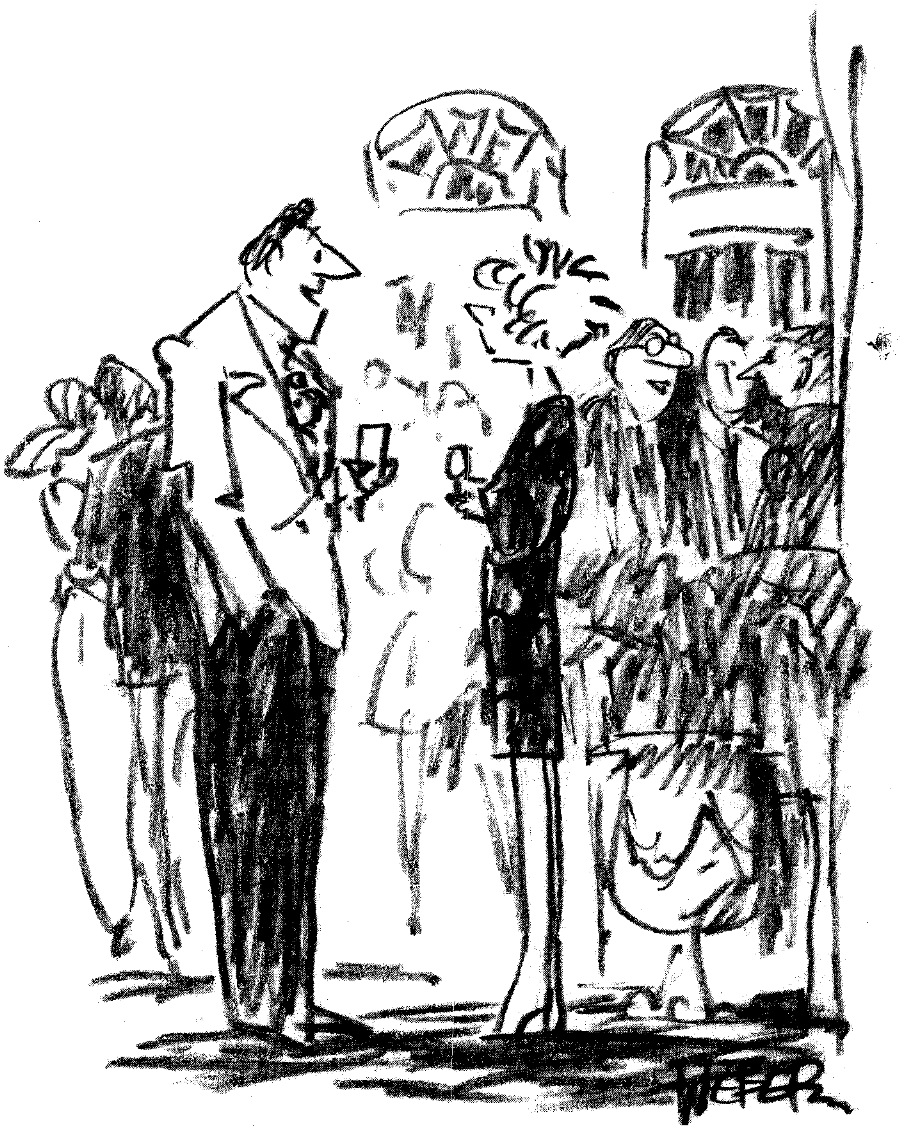

"Let's go someplace where I can talk."

• •

culture, then dies playing the abusive games of rebellion. But it will make me just as sad.

Killing himself as and when he did, Cobain at least managed to deliver a final jolt to the rock world he loved and loathed. Rock stars are glamorized for dying young, but they aren't supposed to kill themselves on purpose. Greil Marcus's invaluable compendium "Rock Death in the 1970s" records—among a hundred and sixteen untimely demises—dozens of drug mishaps and only a handful of suicides. A transcendent drug-induced descent is the preferred exit. Certainly the shotgun blast casts a different light on Cobain's career; the lyrics all sound like suicide notes now. ("What else could I write/I don't have the right/What else should I be/All apologies.") He made his death unrhapsodizable.

The rage we feel at suicides may be motivated by love, but it is the love that comes of possession, not compassion. It is the urge of the crowd to take control of the defective individual. The most mordant words on the subject are still John Donne's, in defense of righteous suicide: "No detestation nor dehortation against this sin of desperation (when it is a sin) can be too earnest. But yet since it may be without infidelity, it cannot be greater than that." This sin cannot be greater than our own urge to rationalize and allegorize the recently dead, especially those who were somehow faithful to themselves. ♦

THE CURRENT CINEMA

JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE, PETE, AND STU

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

WALTER MINUS

IAIN SOFTLEY'S "Backbeat" is the story of an English artist who died at twenty-one, before the world had ever heard of him, and became a kind of celebrity after his death. This movie's hero is one of those tantalizing footnote-to-history characters, whose minor fame is based entirely on their association with something larger: he's Stuart Sutcliffe, who was John Lennon's best friend at the Liverpool College of Art and, for a short time, the bass player of the Beatles. "Backbeat" tries to bring Sutcliffe (Stephen Dorff) out of the shadows of the Beatles legend and give him an unaccustomed turn in the spotlight. Although this is a sweet gesture, the film doesn't quite succeed in turning an obscure sideman into a pop-culture myth in his own right.

In the period that the movie covers—roughly, from August, 1960, when the group played its first night-club gig in Hamburg, to April, 1962, when Sutcliffe died of a brain hemorrhage—the Beatles were unambiguously John Lennon's band. And, despite all Softley's efforts to deflect our attention to the tragic ironies of Stuart's brief career, Lennon (Ian Hart, who has played him before, in Christopher Munch's "The Hours and Times") dominates the movie, too. When "Backbeat" concentrates on Lennon's edgy wit and on the fierce, joyful music that his band is making, it's terrific; when the movie focusses on Stuart Sutcliffe's problems, it seems very ordinary. In one of the picture's funniest scenes, Sutcliffe—who was, by all accounts, not much of a musician—steps to the microphone for his solo spot in the band's set and launches into a toneless, lugubrious rendition of "Love Me Tender"; a few bars into this travesty, his bandmates notice that a record-company executive has entered the club, and they abort Stu's number, rudely lurching into Chuck Berry's "Rock and Roll Music." That scene is the movie in miniature: Stu, a wan presence in dark glasses, can't hold the stage on the strength of his personality; the Beatles carry him for a while and finally drown him out.

There's nothing wrong with Dorff's performance: he's handsome (as Sutcliffe was) and likable, and he and Hart get a lovely rhythm going in their scenes together—they taunt each other in the insolent, self-protectively casual style of youthful friendship. Softley and his co-screenwriters, Michael Thomas and Stephen Ward, have constructed the narrative to emphasize the most obvious dramatic conflict in the Stuart Sutcliffe story: the hero has to decide whether he wants to stay in his friend's band or to devote himself exclusively to painting, which is where his real talent lies. He did, of course, leave the group, thus allowing Paul McCartney (played here by an astonishing look-alike, Gary Bakewell) to take over on bass, and the movie makes his choice fully understandable. "Backbeat" rescues Sutcliffe from the status of historical joke—the poor fool who quit the Beatles. In order to turn Stu's soul-searching into something actable and filmable, Softley presents the story as a tug-of-war between Lennon, representing one horn of the hero's di-

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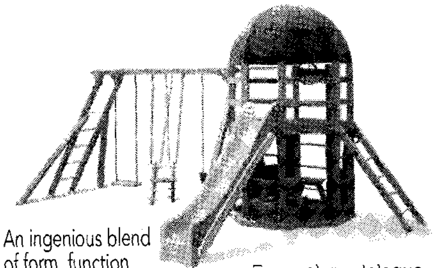

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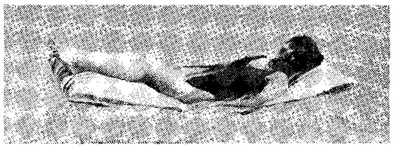

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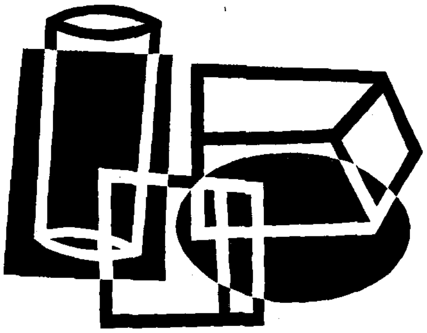
lemma, and Sutcliffe's German girlfriend, Astrid Kirchherr (Sheryl Lee), representing the other. Kirchherr, a photographer and a dedicated bohemian, functions as the voice of wisdom in this picture, quietly and tenderly prodding her lover to be true to himself and live the life of an artist. She dresses in black, reads Rimbaud, and listens to Edith Piaf; she's a glamorous incarnation of the ethos of the European avant-garde, and thus supplies Stu with a concrete and irresistible alternative to the rock-and-roll world that John has drawn him into. The problem with telling the story this way is that the battle between John and Astrid, the principles contending for the hero's soul, makes Stuart himself seem rather passive. He's just a small patch of neutral ground, obscured by the smoke of the mighty armies trying to claim him.

According to the production notes, Softley's interest in the Beatles' Hamburg period began with Astrid Kirchherr's photographs of them, and it's evident that much of the information in "Backbeat" comes directly from her. Her participation in the filmmaker's research may explain why the movie treats her and her arty crowd so gently. The seduction of a working-class Liverpudlian rock-and-roller by a worldly German culture vulture should be sort of funny, but Softley's attitude toward the Hamburg bohemian scene doesn't betray a trace of irony; he's as starry-eyed as his hero. (That's a shame, because portraying Stu as a comic innocent might have given the character the vitality he so desperately needs.) Lennon, who is at first witheringly sarcastic about Astrid, eventually comes to admire her; by the end, his put-downs sound affectionate rather than contemptuous, and he can even listen to Piaf with a measure of equanimity.

This is a very confused movie: a rock-and-roll picture whose script celebrates the values of European high culture—Astrid "wins" Stu from John, and covers herself with glory. The movie's saving grace is that Softley seems not to understand what he's saying. (He probably thinks that there's some sort of spiritual kinship between Astrid's avant-garde taste and the rebellious aesthetic of rock and roll. There isn't.) His direction is ragged, propulsive, and vibrant, like the music Stu Sutcliffe turns his back on, and it's cheerfully, blatantly opportunistic, too. Although Softley knows that it's important to show us Stu's love of art, he's (rightly) afraid of boring us, so he intercuts shots of the hero painting with shots of the Beatles playing, and lets the exhilarating music carry us through that obligatory scene. Stu grows away from John and his music, but the movie never does. A more rigorous director might have realized that the final scene, a wild performance of "Twist and Shout" for an audience of squealing teen-age fans, doesn't exactly clarify the story's meaning: after spending almost two hours persuading us that Stu did the right thing by leaving the group, Softley still can't resist giving us a preview of Beatlemania, the boat that his hero missed. Even if you don't respond to the heavy-handed poignance of the scene, you're grateful for it. The music is raw and thrilling, as Beatles music of that period was. (The musicians on the soundtrack aren't the Beatles but a group of alternative-rock all-stars assembled by Don Was, including Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore, R.E.M.'s Mike Mills, and Nirvana's Dave Grohl; the vocals on Lennon's numbers, like "Twist and Shout," are handled by Greg Dulli, of the Afghan Whigs. They sound wonderful—a little tighter, maybe, than the Beatles were then, but recklessly powerful nonetheless.)

"Backbeat" captures, too, the scuzzily exciting atmosphere of the Hamburg clubs where the band perfected its distinctive sound, and the familial, working-class ambience of the Cavern Club in Liverpool, its home base. And the movie's portrait of Lennon—an angry, unpredictable wise guy, hilariously cynical about everything except the liberating beauty of American rock and roll—rings true. "Backbeat" respects Stu and Astrid, and gives them their due, but, down deep, it loves only what John



Lennon loved: not Edith Piaf or Abstract Expressionism but Little Richard and Chuck Berry, played and sung as if your life depended on it.

IN Ingmar Bergman's autobiography, "The Magic Lantern" (1987), he wrote, "I can still roam through the landscape of my childhood and again experience lights, smells, people, rooms, moments, gestures, tones of voice, and objects. These memories seldom have any particular meaning, but are like short or longer films with no point, shot at random." Randomness isn't a quality you associate with Bergman's art, but since he gave up directing movies, over a decade ago, and began writing books, he has given in to the arbitrariness of his memory. "The Magic Lantern" obviously didn't completely satisfy his autobiographical impulse. In the past few years, he has cranked out a loosely organized collection of reminiscences about his moviemaking career ("Images: My Life in Film"), a novel about his parents ("The Best Intentions," which was later filmed by Bille August), and, most recently, a slim novel called "Sunday's Children," which recounts the events of two days and a night in the life of eight-year-old Ingmar, nicknamed Pu. The film of "Sunday's Children"—directed by Bergman's thirty-one-year-old son, Daniel—is, like the novel, slow, episodic, and, in narrative terms, very casually constructed. You don't sense the presence of an artist willing his experience and his ideas into some kind of form: everything seems just to have tumbled out of Ingmar Bergman's roaming mind, willy-nilly. The big Bergman themes are here—death, sex, religious faith, and the tortured complexity of family relationships—but the movie doesn't bother to arrange them in patterns of significance; it's content to haul them into the light and then leave them strewn before us, like stuff unearthed while rummaging in the attic.

Most of "Sunday's Children" is set in and around the Bergmans' summerhouse in Dufnäs, in the late twenties, and the picture has a lazy, daydreamy rhythm. There's no narrative momentum to speak of: all that holds the story together is the muddled consciousness of Pu (Henrik Linnros), who's trying—and largely failing—to understand the words and events and sensations that

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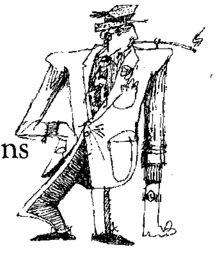
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seem to come at him from everywhere, day and night. Pu is afraid of his father, Erik (Thommy Berggren), a minister who is usually kindly and thoughtful but is prone to sudden fits of violent anger, and he is puzzled by the tension between his father and his elegant mother, Karin (Lena Endre); he wakes one night and overhears a bleak, weary argument between his parents, whispering bitterly in the dull near-darkness of their bedroom. An old servant tells Pu a terrifying story—a local legend—about a watchmaker who went mad and hanged himself in the forest. His mean older brother makes him eat a worm. He accompanies his father on a day trip, by bike and train, to a distant church where Erik gives a sermon; on the way back they get caught in a thunderstorm and have an accident, and Pu, for a split second, thinks his father has been killed. The movie periodically jumps forward to the late sixties and shows us a series of testy encounters between the grownup Ingmar (Per Myrberg) and his father, who is now a frail, befuddled widower, as desperate for his son's approval as little Pu once was for his.

Daniel Bergman (whose first feature this is) gives his father's rambling memories a shimmering, lyrical clarity, and his direction of the actors is extraordinarily sensitive: patiently, he allows Berggren's superb performance to build until, by the end, Erik looms as large in our minds as he does in his son's, and continues to haunt us after the final fadeout. "Sunday's Children" is no more than a series of random vignettes—"short or longer films with no point"—but most of them are striking and evocative, and the undirected, one-thing-after-another flow of recollection becomes, as the picture goes along, surprisingly moving: the apparently artless style reflects, with uncanny precision, the indiscriminate receptivity of a child's imagination. In a strange way, this serene-looking movie is very daring. What Ingmar Bergman has been doing in his recent work—presenting to the world scenes from his youth, in tremendous detail, and leaving them essentially unshaped—reveals a kind of arrogance, an artist's rampant solipsism. But the fresh, awestruck sensuality of "Sunday's Children" is evidence of a quality that transcends mere self-absorption: an unshakable and redeeming innocence. ♦

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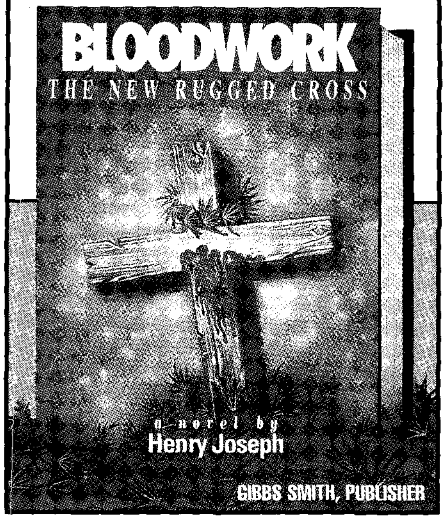

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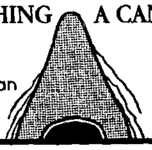
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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

WRITING AND REPORTING

The Edge of Night

by Frank Lentricchia

(Random House; $21)

LENTRICCHIA is a professor of English at Duke who is known for his theoretically muscular criticism and for the tough-guy, T-shirt-and-leather-jacket image he projects. This book is the record of an identity crisis. It is electric with ideas and feelings—about being the son of Italian-American working-class parents, about fatherhood and divorce, about poetry, about solitude, and about the whole muscular-theory, T-shirt-and-leather-jacket, tough-guy thing. In the throes of his crisis, Lentricchia seems to have discovered—or rediscovered—two passions: the fascination with poetry purely as poetry which first drew him to the study of literature, and the consolation writing offers as an escape from one's own personality. The book is partly about the places in which it was written—Ireland, New York's Little Italy, a Trappist monastery in South Carolina—and where Lentricchia went to read his favorite poets (Yeats, Eliot, Stevens) and to brood on his life. He is not sparing with his self-contempt, but he is not exactly ingratiating toward his readers, either, and he has created a voice that is confessional and confrontational in about equal measures. He's an Italian tenor, pouring his beautiful vulnerability all over the room, and then daring us to pity him, or to call him a wimp for wearing a doublet and tights. He may not have solved the riddle of himself, but he knows how to sing.

Nellie Bly

by Brooke Kroeger

(Times; $27.50)

THE reporter Nellie Bly was born in 1885 in the editorial office of a Pittsburgh newspaper when the editor gave that nom de plume—taken from a Stephen Foster song—to a twenty-year-old Pennsylvania woman whose real name was Elizabeth Jane Cochrane. Nellie Bly came of age as a reporter in a time that our own increasingly resembles, a time when she could make her name by journalistic stunts, or what one newspaper called "feats of journalism." Among Nellie Bly's feats: going around the world for the New York *World* in just over seventy-two days while wearing a lucky thumb ring; getting herself committed to a lunatic asylum; interviewing Emma Goldman (whom she called "the little anarchist"); and covering the Pullman strike. She had a taste for gossip, if not an eye for nuance. She married badly, placed her trust unwisely, cared for her family without ceasing, and, near the end of her short life—she died in 1922, at the age of fifty-seven—served as a one-woman adoption agency. As a reporter, Nellie Bly always knew that her best material was herself, and from that material Kroeger has made a serious, interesting, scholarly book.

My Times: Adventures in the News Trade

by John Corry

(Putnam; $24.95)

CORRY, a thirty-one-year veteran of the *Times*, joined the paper when heavy drinking and office card games prevailed, left after a smoke-free newsroom was declared, and wrote thousands of articles in between. His subjects ranged from Masters and Johnson, the Rockefellers and the Kennedys, and the ordinary life of one city block to some trenchant television criticism. He recalls a golden *Times* age of hard news, disdaining today's feature-heavy, "spongier" incarnation of the paper of record. "Man bites dog would once have been a story," he writes, "but it might not be now, unless it touched on racism, sexism, gay rights, or the rain forest." He makes such points inchoately, inserting them as if to leaven an often flat narrative. His conservative agenda fares better when he speaks from hands-on experience. He earned the wrath of the intelligentsia by writing extensively of the Communist disinformation campaign against Jerzy Kosinski. As for personal travails, the author treats them with detachment; it is his association with the *Times* that has apparently defined his life.

FROM OUR PAGES

(*All or part of these recently published books originally appeared in The New Yorker.*)

The End of Vandalism

by Tom Drury

Houghton Mifflin ($21.95)

Master of the Game

by Connie Bruck

Simon & Schuster ($25)

What Is Found There

by Adrienne Rich

(Norton; $20)

IN a series of passionate interrogations of herself, her medium, and her culture, Rich explores the difficulties of constructing connections between poetry, political conviction, and historical realities at a time when even poets can believe their work to be marginal or élitist. Poetry has been suppressed in this country, Rich says, because it does not contribute materially to a capitalist economy, and because it has the potential to release in the disenfranchised the powers of imagination, collective memory, and communal anger. For this, she argues, it has been placed under "house arrest"—not through the overt censorship that elsewhere creates martyrs and provokes rebellion but through the bland and subtle mechanisms of distribution and availability. This is Rich at her most provocative and most nearly despairing, but the book ultimately resists despair. Many of the essays are designed around passages from the work of lesser-known poets of broadly varied backgrounds—Diane Glancy, Judy Grahn, Irena Klepfisz, and Jimmy Santiago Baca, to name only a few—and Rich is most convincing when she illuminates the brilliance of the work that is being produced in this inhospitable climate and testifies to the tenacity of those who refuse to be disappeared. ◆

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

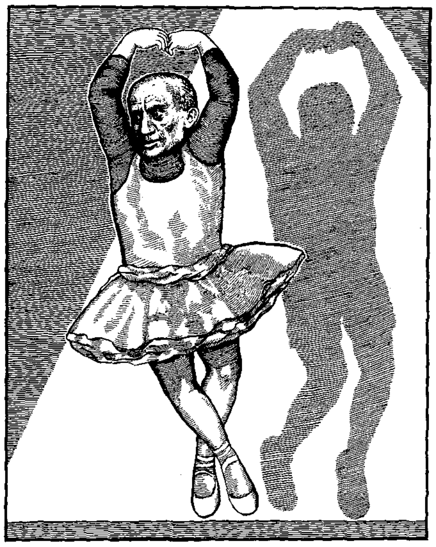
AIR PABLO

BY ROGER ANGELL

Art historians have slighted the startling moment in March, 1924, when Pablo Picasso announced that he was abandoning the career that had already brought him to the pinnacle of the avant-garde as a painter and sculptor, and would henceforth devote himself entirely to becoming a ballet dancer. Through his friendship with Diaghilev, he was enrolled as an advanced student with the Ballets Russes, and, under the special tutelage of Fokine, he launched a ceaseless round of instruction and practice designed to qualify him for a minor role in the company's June première of "Le Train Bleu." Unsurprisingly, the news ignited a firestorm of headlines and gossip in the French press ("PABLO LE FAUNE???"—*Le Matin*, "SACRÉ 'LE SACRE!' "—*Le Figaro*), and rehearsals were disturbed by the popping of flash powder as photographers vied to catch glimpses of the erstwhile Master, in leotard and leg warmers, bending at the barre. Established stars of the medium were reserved to chilly in their comments ("*On verra*"—Anton Dolin, "H'mmm" —Serge Lifar), but Gertrude Stein appeared frequently at morning classes, bearing sandwiches, and was once seen flashing a thumbs-up gesture at her old friend after a misfired *jeté* sent him reeling into the rehearsal piano. Picasso himself remained modest and cheerful during this time of trial. "I don't seem to have the trick of it yet," he confessed to Gerald Murphy, "but I'm having *un bal.*"

Critics and balletomanes, at first enraged at the notion that the genius painter expected to master their discipline in short order, began to soften when it became clear that Picasso was a willing but untalented amateur who experienced repeated frustrations with the Fifth Position. It was believed that he would abandon his plans once it became clear that there would be no room for him in the Ballets' brilliant corps, but when Diaghilev reluctantly demoted him to his Advanced Apprentice School, then touring in the Dordogne, the newcomer packed a straw suitcase and cheerfully went off to join the troupe of thirteen-year-olds. "I can do without *wagons-lits,*" he said, "as long as the Calvados holds out." He remained with the company throughout the summer, perhaps there conceiving some of the convulsive images that were to emerge in his metamorphic canvases after he went back to his brushes.

I thought often of this unlikely scenario—thought it up, in fact—earlier this spring, when Michael Jordan, the retired genius of the N.B.A., arrived in Sarasota as a nonroster invitee to the White Sox' spring training camp. Fan friends of mine took the news hard at first, as if Michael in spikes and pinstripes were an insult to the pastime, but what they secretly feared (what *I* feared, I knew in my heart) was that Jordan, a Michelangelo of athletes, would pick up the sport so quickly as to disprove all our convictions about its unique demands and grinding difficulty. It didn't happen—the very first evening-news footage of Jordan in the batting cage told all—and we brightened at once, nonparticipants who were again secure in our guardianship. "No way!" we said to each other. "Did you see that *swing*?" Jordan went without a hit in his first fourteen at-bats in Grapefruit League games, and was seen messing up a fly ball in short right field, but he persisted, manfully, making it safe for us to begin pulling for him and to hope he'd get better. Now he has gone off to play with the Sox' Class AA Birmingham team, in the Southern League, earning a slight reprieve from the news and our patronizing good will.



MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

Why he is going on with baseball is his own affair, of course (cynics have claimed that it is a publicity device designed to boost his enormous merchandising franchise), but the answer for him might just have to do with the flooding sense of warmth we have held for him ever since he showed himself fallible in a game. In basketball, he was His Airness, so far above the others, so far above us all, that, even with his charm, he became godlike, an object of awe: out of sight. Now, trudging back to the dugout after another feeble pop-up, he is a man whose feet are on the ground. He still burns to succeed, but this time he can be liked as well. ♦

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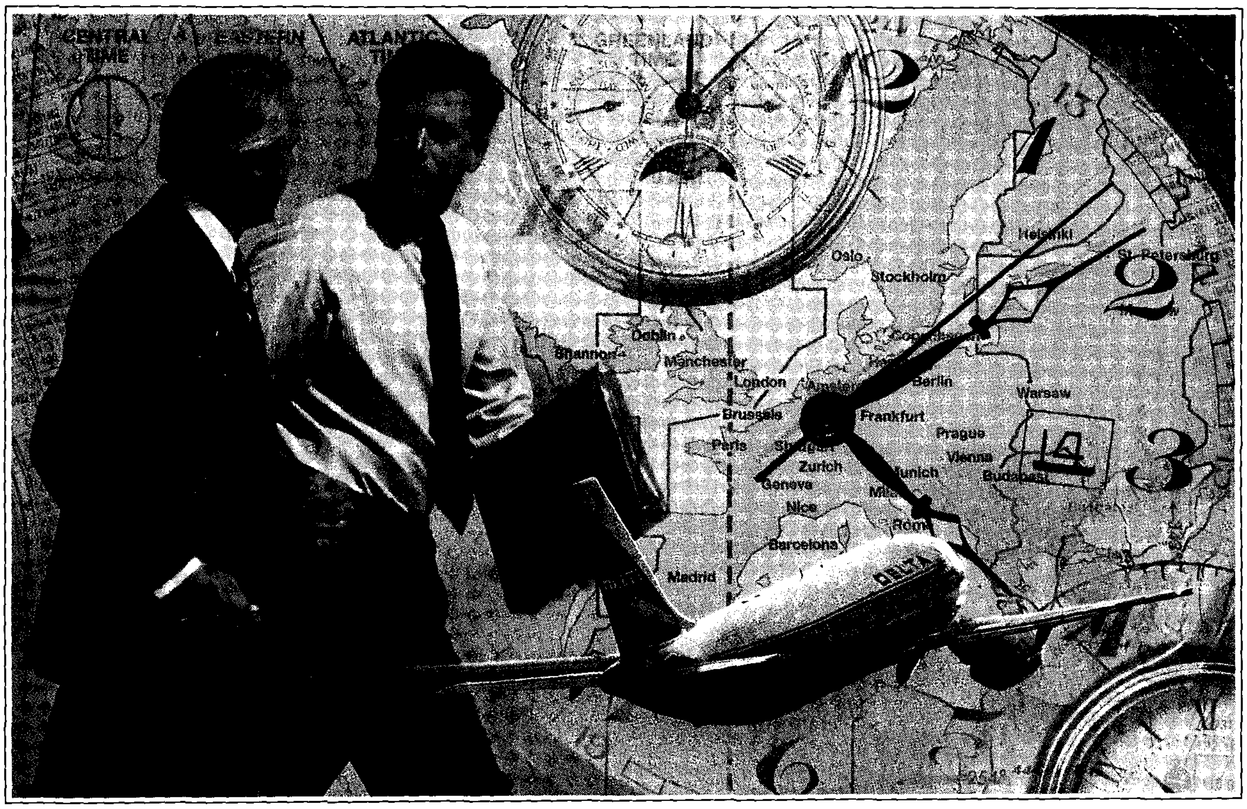
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